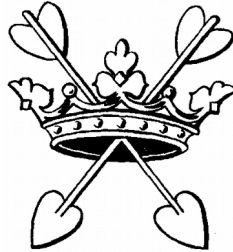


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr (Waterloo, Ontario)



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

UPDATE

August 4, 2004 - **St. Dominic**

September Schedule

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------|---|--|
| September 5 | Sunday | - | The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity |
| September 8 | Wednesday | - | The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary |
| September 12 | Sunday | - | The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity |
| September 14 | Tuesday | - | Holy Cross |
| September 19 | Sunday | - | The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity |
| September 21 | Tuesday | - | St. Matthew the Apostle |
| September 26 | Sunday | - | The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity |
| September 29 | Wednesday | - | St. Michael and All Angels |

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 - **Holy Days** and **Days of Obligation** (Diocesan Ordo) - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** when the Chapel is

available - please phone to confirm.

Notes and Comments

1) There is a banner in the Chapel that we rent that reads "Go in Peace Serve the Lord". Something bothers me about this. Should it not read - "Go in peace to serve the Lord"? Isn't the purpose of going in peace, to serve the Lord? The banner wording seems to be two unrelated directives. Perhaps I am splitting hairs? Comments?

Another thing that bothers me! In the 1962 Prayer Book we talk about sin, in the singular, when it would appear to be more appropriate to be in the plural. For example, in the Gloria - "thou that takest away the sin of the world". The previous Canadian BCP (1918) had "sins". Comments?

2) Our Ordinary's **Bit** - ***The Sermon as Art Form*** - this page.

3) More from *The Affirmation of St. Louis* - **Principles of Morality** - see page 5.

4) A good read for all of us - apologies for the small font - **An Old Lady's Poem** - see page 6.

5) Unbelievable - **NARAL Calls Use of Ultrasound Machines a "Weapon"** - see page 7.

6) **The Anglican world in North America** - see page 7.

7) Christianity Lite - **The do-it-yourself doctrine** - see page 8.

You were asking

Q. In some Parishes, the officiant at Matins and Evensong turns east for the Creed. But in others, he doesn't. Why?

A. From *Ritual Notes* - "It is customary for all to turn towards the altar for the creed . . .; but [this practice is] of recent growth, and cannot claim ancient precedent or rubrical authority." Either would then appear to be acceptable.

The Bishop's Bit

The Sermon as Art Form

Is there any oratory these days, the ability to hold the attention of hearers and then move them to act? In Parliament? On public occasions? In a court when a barrister sums up his case before a jury? At a political rally?

Are there any orators these days? Anybody like, say, Abraham Lincoln or Winston Churchill? I think that on occasions Mrs Thatcher and a few American presidents have had their moments, but their fine words were almost certainly ghosted for them by professional speech writers, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" or, "Ich bin ein Berliner".

We are all blasé about movies, radio, television, theatre, videos. What can life have been like without these easy-to-access forms of entertainment? The wealthy might afford opera and symphony concerts, the rest made do with the music hall and the band concert in a park. And everybody had ready ears and keen minds for orators, whether politicians, lawyers or preachers. Not to put too fine a point upon it, going to church was a form of cheap entertainment. Victorian and Edwardian preachers drew their crowds. What else was there to do on Sundays? And often there was hearty community hymn singing as well, or else good choirs or brass bands to listen to.

And so, for example, Canon Charles Gore CR as he then was, packed Westminster Abbey with working class *men* who came to hear his courses on, say, the *Sermon on the Mount*, or *Ephesians* or *Romans*. Dr Neville Figgis CR would draw hundreds of university students. Fr Paul Bull CR would draw soldiers, Bishop Timothy Rees CR would draw Welsh miners.

Dr Spurgeon was a famous Baptist preacher, one of whose hearers objected

to the minister's apparent affluence, "Jesus rode a donkey. Why does the preacher use a carriage and horses?" Dr Spurgeon replied, "If that person will meet me at the door afterwards, I shall saddle him and ride him home." Fr Harold Ellis CR was novice master at Mirfield. He required his charges to study Spurgeon's sermons, and to train for open air preaching. He himself was a crowd pleaser. People would look to see where he was holding forth on St Paul's day: he would fall down the pulpit steps as the apostle had fallen from his horse. On summer afternoons at Mirfield hundreds of working class men would walk to open air services held in a disused quarry in our grounds, converted into a theatre for this purpose.

Famous Roman Catholic preachers, Father Faber, Cardinal Manning, Father Maturin, Cardinal Newman, Father Vernon, had their fans. As it happens, all these men were ex Anglicans. Faber was emotionally charged and dramatic, Newman was intellectual and poetic. I sometimes wonder how hearers kept up with Newman's long and convoluted sentences, especially as he avoided dramatic artifices. Moody and Sankey were famous evangelical preachers in the USA who made preaching tours of Britain.

What's more, books of sermons sold well. In recent times the sermons of C S Lewis, a layman; Fr Harry Williams CR; Dr Austin Farrer of Oxford University; and Helmut Thielike, a German Lutheran, were the only ones which could count on a ready market. Also the sermons of Father Ronald Knox, another Anglican turned RC. As late as the 1960's Great St Mary's in Cambridge drew students to the sermons of visiting preachers, which were afterwards published in paperback form by so prosperous a firm as *Collins Fontana*.

In Southern Africa cathedral deans were normally colourful controversial characters. We took it for granted that oratory was among their skills. I could here and now reel off a long list of deans, but I shan't bore you with such details,

though I shall praise Gonville Aubie French-Beytagh, first of Harare and then of Johannesburg. He had been born in China, been abandoned by his parents, roamed about as a hobo until a life-altering conversion. On Sunday nights you had to go early to get a good seat at evensong for his sermons, which like as not would make it into Monday morning's newspaper. He was pink, plump and ugly, with enormous horn rimmed specs. He maintained that the health of a parish was judged not by the number of communicants on Easter day, but by the number at 6.30 am on Easter Monday. In his time the cathedral had mass almost every half hour on Mondays through to Fridays. The first Sunday mass was at 5 am.

There were also orators on the bench of bishops, Archbishop Jimmy Hughes of Central Africa, Archbishop Joost de Blank of Cape Town, Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton of Cape Town. This last was short, fat and ugly; he seemed to have no neck: an enormous head and an enormous tum rested on spindly legs. But how awed hearers were by the power of his mind, the clarity of his thought and expression, by his brilliant use of voice and eyebrows, "We have no Calvin, we have no Luther, we have no Aquinas, but we Anglicans can learn from them".

The greatest orator under whom I have been privileged to sit, was Fr Jonathan Graham CR*, especially when he preached on the Old Testament. Like Apollos of Acts 18,24 Jonathan was "mighty in the Scriptures" ie in the OT. To hear him was to know what the *Letter to the Hebrews* means when it says, "The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit" (4,12).

But God plays jokes on preachers. However silly, however poorly constructed or delivered a sermon is, the Holy Spirit may use it to move the hearts and minds of hearers. Conversely, however brilliant the oratory may be as art form, unless the Spirit uses it the sermon is but sound and

fury signifying nothing.

"Except the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it" (*Psalms* 127,1).

+Robert Mercer CR

* He published two paperbacks which increase one's enjoyment of the Old Testament, "*He Came Unto His Own*" and "*The Office of a Wall*".

By **The Bishop Ordinary - The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada**

From here and there

a) "The ordination of women removed ECUSA [USA Canterbury Anglicans] from the Catholic fold of the Church, and the election and consecration of Gene Robinson [a divorced, openly-gay priest] has removed ECUSA from the Christian religion." **Bishop Kapinga of the Diocese of Ruvuma in Tanzania**

b) Our society must make it right and possible for old people not to fear the young and be deserted by them, for the test of a civilization is the way that it cares for its helpless members. **Pearl S. Buck**

c) What we previously knew only in theory has become for us a practical experience: the Church stands and falls with the Liturgy. When the adoration of the divine Trinity declines, when the faith no longer appears in its fullness in the Liturgy of the Church, when man's words, his thoughts, his intentions are suffocating him, then faith will have lost the place where it is expressed and where it dwells. For that reason, the true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church. **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger**

d) **Edible**, adj.: Good to eat, and wholesome to digest, as a worm to a toad, a toad to a snake, a snake to a pig, a pig to a man, and a man to a worm. **Ambrose Bierce**

e) A man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong, which is but saying, in other words, that he is wiser today than he was yesterday. **Alexander Pope**

f) The history of liberty is a history of the limitation of government power, not the increase of it. **Woodrow Wilson**

g) *O God, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding: Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (Collect for Trinity VI)

The doctrine contained in the relative clause "who has prepared . . ." is the mystery and yet confidence of the Christian Hope. To be with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven in the company of the saints and with all the angels and archangels and there to enjoy the beatific vision of the Father Almighty are the good things that pass our understanding. To live in perfect communion with the Holy Trinity and in heavenly blessedness is the goal of the true Christian soul and the fulfilment of the promises of the Gospel. **The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon**

h) Can you imagine working for a company that has a little more than 300 employees and has the following statistics:

30 have been accused of spousal abuse
9 have been arrested for fraud
14 have been accused of writing bad cheques
95 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 business
4 have done time for assault
55 can not get a credit card due to bad debt
12 have been arrested on drug-related charges
4 have been arrested for shoplifting
16 are currently defendants in lawsuits
62 have been arrested for drunk driving in the last year

Can you guess which organization this is? It is the 301 MPs in the Canadian Parliament. The same group that cranks out hundreds of new laws designed to keep the rest of us in line. From the *Ottawa Citizen*

i) The Master of Ceremonies [at Solemn Mass] should know not only what he has to do himself, but also the function of everyone else. It is his business to see that the ceremony is carried out correctly by all who take part in it. It is supposed that the MC has accurate knowledge of the entire function, and in the discharge of his duties he has no fixed place nor act. He must be considered quite free in his movements in order that he may secure the most perfect possible conduct of the ceremonies, but this is no licence for gyrovagy; his movements should be purposeful and kept to a minimum. In general, of course, the MC is to be regarded as chiefly concerned with the celebrant at any function and his normal place is at the celebrant's side. He must, if necessary, guide the servers by some sign, as little noticeable as possible. If a mistake is unimportant it is wiser to let it pass at the time and to point it out afterwards. Even should a major mistake occur, he must exhibit no sign of distress, but calmly attend to the necessary correction in such a way that his correction itself appears to be part of the ritual. From *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described*

j) Where musical resources are too limited for singing all the portions of a sung Office (Matins or Evensong), the Psalms of the day are the most important portion to sing. From *Saint Dunstan's Plainsong Psalter*

k) The whole orientation of liberalism is contradictory to the Christian message. John Locke's proposal that the people are sovereign is seductive. If people are sovereign, what are we to say of God? If people are sovereign, the human will is sovereign, and no limits can legitimately be placed on it. To paraphrase Dostoevsky, if everything is to be allowed, then there can be no God. **Charles**

Moore **Principles of Morality**

The conscience, as the inherent knowledge of right and wrong, cannot stand alone as a sovereign arbiter of morals. Every Christian is obligated to form his conscience by the Divine Moral Law and the Mind of Christ as revealed in Holy Scriptures, and by the teaching and Tradition of the Church. We hold that when the Christian conscience is thus properly informed and ruled, it must affirm the following moral principles:

Individual Responsibility

All people, individually and collectively, are responsible to their Creator for their acts, motives, thoughts and words, since "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ . . ."

Sanctity of Human Life

Every human being, from the time of his conception, is a creature and child of God, made in His image and likeness, an infinitely precious soul; and that the unjustifiable or inexcusable taking of life is always sinful.

Man's Duty to God

All people are bound by the dictates of the Natural Law and by the revealed Will of God, insofar as they can discern them.

Family Life

The God-given sacramental bond in marriage between one man and one woman is God's loving provision for procreation and family life, and sexual activity is to be practiced only within the bonds of Holy Matrimony.

Man as Sinner

We recognize that man, as inheritor of original sin, is "very far gone from original righteousness," and as a rebel against God's authority is liable to His righteous judgment.

Man and God's Grace

We recognize, too, that God loves His children and particularly has shown it forth in the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that man cannot be

saved by any effort of his own, but by the Grace of God, through repentance and acceptance of God's forgiveness.

Christian's Duty to be Moral

We believe, therefore, it is the duty of the Church and her members to bear witness to Christian Morality, to follow it in their lives, and to reject the false standards of the world.

From ***The Affirmation of St. Louis (1977)*** to which *The Traditional Anglican Communion* subscribes. ("We affirm as integral to the history and essential to the formation of this Communion all of the doctrinal, moral and other theological principles set out in the Declaration of loyal Anglicans gathered in the Congress of St. Louis, Missouri, United States of America in the year 1977, generally known as *The Affirmation of St. Louis.*" - item 3.3 in the TAC Concordat of 1990)

An Old Lady's Poem

When an old lady died in the geriatric ward of a small hospital near Dundee, Scotland, it was felt that she had nothing left of any value. Later, when the nurses were going through her meagre possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital. One nurse took her copy to Ireland.

The old lady's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Christmas edition of the News Magazine of the North Ireland Association for Mental Health. A slide presentation has also been made based on her simple, but eloquent, poem. And this little old Scottish lady, with nothing left to give to the world, is now the author of this "anonymous" poem winging across the Internet. Goes to show that we all leave "SOME footprints in time".

The Poem

What do you see, nurses, what do you see?

What are you thinking when you're looking at me?

A crabby old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with faraway eyes?

Who dribbles her food and makes no reply.
When you say in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try!"

Who seems not to notice the things that you do,
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe . . .
Who, resisting or not, lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill . . .
Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?

Then open your eyes, nurse; you're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,
As I do at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten . . . with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters, who love one another.

A young girl of sixteen, with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.

A bride soon at twenty - my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.
At twenty-five now, I have young of my own,
Who need me to guide and a secure happy home.

A woman of thirty, my young now grown fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last.
At forty, my young sons have grown and are gone,
But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn.

At fifty once more babies play round my knee,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead;
I look at the future, I shudder with dread.

For my young are all rearing young of their own,
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.

I'm now an old woman . . . and nature is cruel;
'Tis jest to make old age look like a fool.

The body, it crumbles, grace and vigor depart,
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.

But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells.

I remember the joys, I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years . . . all too few, gone too fast,
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.

So open your eyes, nurses, open and see,
. . . Not a crabby old woman; look closer, see ME!!

Remember this poem when you next
meet an old person who you might brush
aside without looking at the young soul
within. We will one day be there, too!

Submitted by **Fr. Stanley Sinclair** to the
July 2004 issue of *The Epistle*

NARAL Calls Use of Ultrasound Machines a "Weapon"

"They don't want them to go to Planned Parenthood, where they'll get their full range of options. They just want them to go to crisis pregnancy centers, where women will be exposed to this weapon at taxpayer's expense."

So said NARAL [National Abortion Rights Action League] Pro-Choice America's director of government relations in response to legislation introduced by Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL) that would assist pregnancy resource centers in purchasing new 4-D ultrasound equipment for their facilities.

This incredible technology allows a mother the opportunity to see her baby moving in real time, and allows them to see amazing detail of facial and body features. Using this technology, parents are able to see their unborn child move; cry and even smile.

Rep. Stearns likes to call the ultrasound equipment a "womb with a view." Under his legislation the government will pay part of the cost of the machine for non-profit pregnancy centers that provide ultrasounds for free. Even though abortion clinics receive taxpayer dollars they charge fees for ultrasounds, so abortion clinics are not eligible for these grants. That is why groups like NARAL and Planned Parenthood, who have profited from abortion for years, call this amazing tool a "weapon."

But I'm glad they recognize that the truth is a weapon, and I'm also glad it's a weapon they don't have. For years abortionists have misused medical technology to promote abortion; but new technology is showing just how barbaric abortion really is. The abortion lobby likes to argue that a fetus is merely a "blob of tissue," but 4-D ultrasound technology defeats that argument soundly - "blobs of tissue" don't smile.

By **Tony Perkins** - the president of the *Family Research Council* and a former Louisiana state Representative.

The Anglican world in North America

This month there are pressures on your editor's available space. I must needs be brief. Last month I completed a survey of the movements in the Anglican world in North America. Doubtless that will need to be up-dated again as "official" Anglicanism unravels further. Right now it is time to move on to a consideration of what Anglican Continuers are to be about, and I shall make a start in this short article.

There are three groups of people who might claim to be Continuers in Canada. There are ourselves in the ACCC. Then there are the members of the Reformed Episcopal Church which has been active in Canada here and there for over a century. The nearest congregations to us are in Hamilton and Scarborough. The REC in Canada is not a separate Church but a diocese of the REC which exists principally in the USA and is especially strong in the Afro-American community of the Carolinas. Bishop Mercer has cultivated close links and co-operation with the REC which, in the USA, is now making official "common cause" with the AAC, AMinA, the Network, Forward in Faith, and the Anglican Province of America, with which, alas, we have no ties, but only links of cordiality through its chief bishop, Walter Grundorf, whose kindness at the launching of the TAC in Orlando in 1989 I have particular cause to remember. The third group in Canada which can claim to be continuing the Anglican Way is the Anglican Communion in Canada consisting for the moment of five congregations in and around Vancouver which have repudiated the ACC Bishop Ingham and have placed themselves under the jurisdiction of five overseas Primates of the Anglican Communion exercised through a bishop of the AMinA.

Step number one for us should surely be to try to foster and nurture links with these other two groups and to do what we can to make common cause in this

country. All three groups may be represented at the Canadian PanAnglican rally being put on by Essentials in Ottawa at the end of August. (I have not included Essentials itself within the continuing fold because its members are still firmly within the ACC and most are still firmly wedded to the BAS, the ordination of women, the liberal sexual agenda except for homosexuality, the human rights agenda, and what is called "open evangelicalism". Despite much talk of biblical supremacy there is little sympathy evinced by Essentialists for the classic scholars of the Anglican Way from the Elizabethan period, through the Caroline Divines, the old High Church Party, and the nineteenth century revival.)

At our recent Synod, and at the preceding Diocesan Council meeting, I made my standard plea for the ACCC to develop for herself a strategic plan. I concluded my last article by saying that we did not have one. We need one. We need desperately, in fact, to know what we are about: what we are trying to do, and why, and how we consider we might best go about it. Otherwise we shall simply drift. Without a strategic plan we shall not be able to formulate any tactical responses to situations as they unfold. And, of course, we shall have no basis for planning, budgeting, raising money, or giving our members a sense of purpose. This is surely *step number two*.

Next month I shall begin to consider the various alternatives that present themselves as the purpose of the ACCC. Until then I leave with you the thought that you are more than members of a local congregation. You are members of a movement, albeit one that has not yet articulated its purpose. We need to have a church-wide consultation to allow us to bring that purpose forward and to identify our mission. Our people need to feel ownership of a strategic plan, and to know that they are determining the purpose and fixture of the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Input and participation by our laity are imperative. The Church is not a hobby of the clergy. We could start with local visioning days as

separate and distinct events from any other church activity, congregational, rural-decanal or synodical. It is not a question of "Power to the People" but of "Power from the Spirit through the People"!

By **The Rev. Graham C. Eglinton**,
Chancellor of The Anglican Catholic
Church of Canada

The do-it-yourself doctrine

Call it Christianity Lite. It's the assertion - no, the insistence - that you can be a Christian in good standing though you reject all or significant parts of the brand of Christianity to which you formally adhere. Even Jesus Christ - and who he was - is negotiable, not to mention traditional teachings on sex, abortion and divorce. Who's to tell you what to think and do as a Christian - or to judge you wanting? It's a heresy nowadays to accuse someone of heresy.

Consider these phenomena:

- John F. Kerry, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, is campaigning as a Catholic candidate. His website declares that he 'was raised in the Catholic faith and continues to be an active member of the Catholic Church.' Kerry is also campaigning as the candidate of NARAL Pro-Choice America, the abortion-industry advocacy group, whose endorsement he won with an absolutist stance on abortion rights, which is anathema to the Catholic Church. Several US Catholic bishops recently have stated that Catholics in public life who support abortion rights are not in good standing with the church and should not receive the Eucharist, the church's most sacred sacrament, at Mass. Kerry's response - besides scrambling to find individual Catholic churches liberal enough to allow him into their communion lines - has been to declare that the church has no business 'instructing politicians' on issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage.

- Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* claims that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, fathered a child by her and installed her as the head of his new religion centered on goddess worship ('the sacred feminine,' in Brown's words). None of this is in the Gospels, but that's because, says Brown, the all-male hierarchy of bishops conspired during the fourth century to squelch rival gospels and other Christian texts that granted power to women. The bishops also forced their flocks to adhere to the Nicene Creed, which declares there is but a single, male deity whose son, also divine, was Jesus (in Brown's view, the real Jesus was just a wise human teacher of feminist leanings). In short, Brown contends, what we know as traditional Christianity is simply the result of a long-ago political struggle.

- Religion historian Elaine Pagels' latest book, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*, another bestseller, also contends that creeds - professions of faith that go hand in hand with Christian orthodoxy in many churches - were a belated and oppressive development, crushing a vibrant, competing spirituality embodied in the Gnostics, a group of early Christian seekers deemed heretical. Pagels urges a do-it-yourself reorganization of the New Testament that would jettison the faith-promoting canonical Gospel of John ('He who believes in me . . .') in favour of the Gospel of Thomas, a loosey-goosey Gnostic collection of sayings attributed to Jesus that stress finding the kingdom of God inside yourself. 'I cannot love . . . the tendency to identify Christianity with a single set of authorized beliefs,' Pagels writes.

That's having your Christian cake and eating it too. The phenomenon - a pervasive anti-authoritarianism, a readiness to accommodate religious teaching to prevailing secular mores and an insistence that individuals have a right to carve out their own relationship with the Christian tradition - exists not only among mainline denominations but even, if to a lesser extent, among Evangelicals, whose high divorce rate contradicts Jesus' teachings in the Scriptures about the

lifelong nature of marriage. 'There tend to be much more liberal attitudes toward divorce [in the Evangelical churches] than when I was a kid growing up,' says John Wilson, editor of *Books & Culture*, the literary arm of the Evangelical magazine *Christianity Today*. 'Evangelicals' expectations about marriage have been contaminated by the expectations of the larger culture,' Wilson says. 'You give it up and look for someone else who's going to be the perfect person whom God wanted you to marry.'

'There was a dramatic increase in college education,' says W. Bradford Wilcox, a sociologist at the University of Virginia. 'Suddenly, many more Americans had the same basic educational training as their pastors and priests, and they felt entitled to make the same decisions about belief . . . The second thing that happened is that their professors and the members of the cultural elite became anti-authoritarian themselves.'

The cultural and attitudinal shifts of the 1960s are one important source for many Christians' individualistic attitudes. Furthermore, the post-World War II economic roll, still continuing, opened up social and geographic mobility to many Americans for the first time, but it also unmoored them from traditional sources of religious authority in family, church and community.

The sea change hit Catholics, of all Christians, especially hard, Wilcox notes. Somewhat culturally and geographically isolated in urban ethnic parishes until the 1950s and distrusted by their Protestant neighbours, Catholics were moving more into the mainstream, and the election of John F. Kennedy as president in 1960, coupled with rising post-war suburban prosperity, accelerated the migration. Catholicism was becoming even more comfortable with American culture just when it was beginning to change in ways that were incompatible with traditional Catholic moral teaching on divorce, extramarital sex and abortion.

'There's always an antithesis between

Christ and culture,' says Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and editor of First Things magazine, 'but when JFK was president, 99% of Catholics assumed there was a neat, non-problematic fit.' The old close-knit parishes were disappearing, the children were increasingly in public schools, the ecclesiastical and liturgical changes of the Second Vatican Council were leading many Catholics to question the authority of priests and bishops - and most Catholics, politicians included, simply followed where the secular culture led.

When in January 2003 the bishop of Sacramento ordered former Gov. Gray Davis, a Catholic whose administration boasted of making California 'the most pro-choice state in America,' to change his views or stop receiving communion, a Davis spokesman accused the bishop of 'telling the faithful how to practice their faith.'

So, the consumer mentality rules in the world of Christianity Lite: the notion that no-one has the right to tell anyone how to practice his or her faith, or indeed what that faith should consist of. Individual choice, not the tradition handed down by parents or grandparents, increasingly governs belief, practice and denominational affiliation.

There is an upside to that, however, as Wilcox points out. 'Many are moving out of their traditions, but when they land in a particular tradition, they take it much more seriously. They're better-educated, and they're more self-conscious about passing it on. Our society is becoming overall more secular, but there is an increase in the minority of Americans who take their faith seriously.'

That is the paradox of Christianity Lite. It can breed its own dissatisfactions, including a hunger to lose oneself religiously in something outside of and larger than oneself. That is why, by all reports, the Christian churches and

communities that insist on going against the 'spirituality' zeitgeist and making genuine demands on their members are thriving.

By **Charlotte Allen** - author of *The Human Christ: The Search for the Historical Jesus* - this article is from the June 2004 issue of *New Directions*, page 25.

Did you know?

Aoccdrnig to rseerach at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae.

The rset can be a tatol mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig, huh?

Gary S. Freeman

102 Frederick Banting Place
Waterloo, Ontario N2T 1C4

(519) 886-3635 (Home)
(800) 265-2178 or (519) 747-3324 (Office)
(519) 747-5323 (Fax)
gfreeman@pwi-insurance.ca

Parish website:
www.pwi-insurance.ca/stedmund

Parish email:
stedmund@pwi-insurance.ca

Enclosures:
The Diocesan Circular
The Messenger