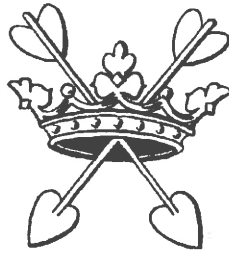


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Guelph)



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

UPDATE

May 15, 2001

June Schedule

June 3	Sunday	-	Day of Pentecost / Whitsunday
June 10	Sunday	-	Trinity Sunday
June 12	Tuesday	-	St. Barnabas the Apostle
June 14	Thursday	-	Corpus Christi
June 17	Sunday	-	Trinity I
June 24	Sunday	-	Nativity of St. John the Baptist / Trinity II
June 29	Friday	-	St. Peter and St. Paul the Apostles

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 said at 10:00 a.m. (The Litany on the first Sunday of the month), and the Holy Eucharist is celebrated at 10:30 a.m.
- (3) On weekdays - Holy Days and Days of Obligation (Red Letter Days in the Prayer Book Calendar) - the Holy Eucharist is celebrated at 7:00 p.m., 10:30 a.m. on Saturdays - when the Chapel is available!

Notes

A reminder - The Monthly Parish Lunch (after Mass) is on the 4th Sunday of the month, not the last Sunday!

Apologies for all the enclosures - but, it's all good stuff!

Saint Bede, Priest, Doctor, and Historian

Saint Bede was born in Northumbria, England, in 673; and died at Jarrow, England, on May 25, 735.

In the days when Northumbria was a great scholastic center with famous schools at Jarrow and York, Bede was the most distinguished of its scholars. Beginning at age seven (or three?), he was educated at the newly-founded monastery at Wearmouth-Jarrow under Abbots Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid. In 703, he was received as a monk by Saint Benedict Biscop and ordained a priest at age 30 by Saint John of Beverley. Except for a few brief visits elsewhere, Bede spent the rest of his life in Jarrow; never going further afield than Lindisfarne and York.

"I have spent my whole life", he says, "in the same monastery, and while attentive to the rule of my order and the service of the Church, my constant pleasure lay in learning or teaching or writing." He numbered 600 monks among his pupils and became the Father of English learning. "I have devoted my energies to the study of Scriptures, observing monastic discipline, and singing the daily services in church."

Bede was a prodigious worker, the author of 45 volumes, including commentaries, text-books, and translations. His range was encyclopedic, embracing the whole field of contemporary knowledge. He wrote grammatical and chronological works, hymns and other verse, letters, and homilies, and compiled the first martyrology with historical notes. These are in Latin, but Bede was also the first known writer of English prose (since lost). Bede's Biblical writings were extensive and important in their time, but it is as an historian that he is famous. The Latin of the hymns 'The hymn for conquering martyrs raise' and 'Sing we triumphant hymns of praise' was written by Bede.

His supreme achievement, completed in 731, was his *History of the English Church and People*, in the

laborious preparation of which he searched the archives of Rome (most sources say he never left England), collecting and collating documents, and set forth in detail the first authoritative history of Christian origins in Britain. To this he added *Lives* of five early abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow. Not until his last illness had he any assistance: "I am my own secretary; I dictate, I compose, I copy all myself."

Many stories have gathered round his name. This one is probably mythic: On a visit to Rome with other scholars, he found them puzzled by an inscription of cryptic letters upon an iron gate. A passing Roman citizen, seeing their confusion, sneered at Bede and rudely called him an English ox, when, to his surprise, Bede at once read out the meaning. From that time, because of the range of his wisdom and the keenness of his intellect, he was given the title of venerable.

But the best-known story is related by his contemporary Saint Cuthbert of how, when illness and weakness came upon him at the end of his life, his translation of Saint John's Gospel into the English tongue was still unfinished. Despite sleepless nights and days of weariness, he continued his task, and though he made what speed he could, he took every care in comparing the text and preserving its accuracy. "I don't want my boys", he said, "to read a lie or to work to no purpose after I am gone." His friends begged him to rest, but he insisted on working. "We never read without weeping", remarked one of them.

When it came to the last day, he called his scribe to him and told him to write with all possible speed. "There is still a chapter wanting", said the boy, as the day wore on; "had you not better rest for a while?" But Bede persisted with his task. "Be quick with your writing", he answered, "for I shall not hold out much longer."

When night fell, the boy said: "There is yet one sentence not written." "Write quickly", Bede replied; and when it was done, he said: "All is finished now", then after sending for his fellow monks and distributing to them his few belongings, in a broken voice he sang the Gloria and passed to his reward on Ascension Eve.

Of all the writers in Western Europe from the time of Saint Gregory the Great until Saint Anselm, Saint Bede was perhaps the best known and most influential, especially in England. He was a careful scholar and distinguished stylist. His works *De Temporibus* and *De Temporum Ratione*

established the idea of dating events anno domini (A.D.).

Already in 853 a church council in Aachen referred to him as 'the venerable', i.e., worthy of honor. Saint Boniface called Bede 'a light of the church, lit by the Holy Spirit'. To Alcuin, himself the 'schoolmaster of his age', he was 'blessed Bede, our master'. (Alcuin claimed Bede's relics worked miraculous cures.) Bede is the only Englishman whom Dante names in the *Paradiso*. The center of Bede's cultus is Durham, where his shrine is located, and York.

Saint Bede's feast day is May 27.

From For all the Saints website

The Bishop's Bit

OSMOSIS

From time to time Helen Glover contributes an article to *Update* about happy or amusing events in her childhood or in her student years. I thought therefore that this month I too might reminisce.

Public worship these days is modelled on the music hall. The presiding officer faces his audience, whom he must keep amused, lest they desert him for some other place of entertainment. Perhaps he strides up and down clutching a mike. He thanks the people for coming. He wants them to feel good about themselves. The people sit in comfy seats. They laugh a lot. They feel neighbourly about one another. They talk loudly as they wait for the show to begin. Perhaps they shake hands or hug in the middle of proceedings. Obviously there will be some difference between a hot gospel crystal "cathedral" on the one hand, and an Anglican or Roman Catholic Church on the other hand. But the similarities are greater than the differences. The church is turned in on itself.

I know an Anglican parish, not in Canada, where the President when he enters begins with, "Top o' the morning to you". "And also with you", the congregation replies. "Well now", he goes on, "Let's see. Whose birthday is it? Mary's. Happy birthday, Mary! What hymn would you like?" Readers read inaudibly, despite microphones. There is self important bustle at the offertory. The intercessions are offered up in such a way that one can not tell if what one hears is prayer, sermonizing or the parish notices for that fact. The big moment is the kiss of non peace, when the

racket lasts seven minutes as everybody but everybody hugs everybody else. "And with you. See you tonight at bridge. I love your new hair do."

When I was a small boy in junior school, twelve hundred miles from home, we were sent to a "low" church. We marched there in crocodiles, dressed in navy suits, stiff white collars and hard straw hats nicknamed boaters, bashers, cheese cutters, or cheesies. There we went through full blown mattins and sermon, way above our heads. But clearly church was an adult activity, and we wanted to be grown up so we could smoke, drink and, above all, drive cars. Actually, we were already experimenting with cigarettes, but secretly lest we be expelled from school. A feature of this church was the large number of girls from our sister school. They too were in navy blue and straw hats. But their headmistress wanted them to enjoy a wider experience of Anglicanism. Our low church was atop a steep hill. At the bottom of this hill was the "high" church. To this the girls were marched for six months of the year.

The two parishes were on excellent terms. My Irish godfather was rector of Holy Trinity up the hill, but he was an honorary priest of St Mary's down the hill. He was just as happy whether the air was blue with incense or not. Nobody told us that the differences between low and high were unimportant, but somehow we just absorbed this fact. We all worshipped from the same Prayer Book, observed the same kalendar, attended the same mass, believed the same Bible, recited the identical creeds. By osmosis we learned the importance of these creeds. The low congregation stood strictly to attention, even though the choir did not turn to face east. At the name of Jesus every head bowed in unison. If anything, the low congregation was much stricter about the fast before communion, and the silence before communion also. Folk "fasted" from speech.

A close friend worshipped with the Presbyterians. Occasionally I got permission to accompany him. At the Hill Presbyterian Church the same atmosphere of intense reverence prevailed. All were in church in good time. All wore Sunday best. All waited in silence for worship to begin. People read their Bibles or hymn books, or prayed. The verger entered carrying a large Bible, which he bore solemnly to a cushion in the pulpit. A few minutes later the minister entered with lowered head. His opening words were always the same, "Let us worship God". I got the strong impression that God mattered, that the Bible was important, that Sunday was important, that worship was an

adult activity into which I had to grow, as I had to grow into other adult pastimes like driving cars. There was no dumbing down.

Occasionally at an exeat week end I'd be allowed to the high church. The gospel procession when the Bible was carried down into the congregation, accompanied by cross, candles and incense, all led by the verger, taught the same thing the verger's solemn carrying of the Book taught in the Presbyterian church. Except, of course, that we Anglicans lept to our feet for the holy gospel. Jesus was among us speaking His words. Incense "owned the Deity nigh". This church had added attractions, an enormous choir of men and boys that sang superbly, an army of men and boys to serve, and stories about the ghosts of two former rectors who were buried in the chancel. One was said to play the organ at night, the other to pitch up at weddings.

By behaviour, by unspoken convictions, do adults teach children. And children learn by absorption. Liquid in one vessel can pass through a membrane into its neighbouring vessel.

+Robert Mercer, CR

By the Bishop Ordinary - The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

"Still Falls the Rain"

A VISIT TO COVENTRY - A MODERN CATHEDRAL

The title comes from a poem by Edith Sitwell, and refers to the rattling sound of incendiary bombs falling on London during the 1940 Blitz. On November 14th of that year the city of Coventry suffered the longest air raid of any one night on any British city. The beautiful 14th Century Cathedral, built and endowed throughout the following centuries by prosperous merchants, guilds and manufacturers, was completely destroyed by incendiary bombs, not high explosive. In consequence, the blackened, outer walls, the 295 ft. tower and spire remained intact. As the roof burned large, medieval, hand-forged nails rained down and littered the ruined floor. A few days after the bombing two irregular, oaken roof beams appeared, charred but still solid, fastened together with wire into the form of a cross and set into a bin used to store sand for smothering incendiary bombs. The 'Charred Cross' became world famous, and was set up on the remains of the stone altar. The words 'FATHER FORGIVE' were

carved into the blackened stone wall behind. At the foot of the 'Charred Cross' another cross was fashioned from three of the roofing nails that literally poured down like rain as the Cathedral perished. Fearing vandalism, in 1978 the original 'Charred Cross' was moved into the undercroft, the crypt of the new Cathedral, and a replica put in its place.

The rubble has since been cleared and wooden seats placed longitudinally along the nave under the open sky. Visitors sit and meditate in the quiet atmosphere. The feeling of sorrow for what happened in the past still clings, along with the awareness that this is still a hallowed place.

The decision to rebuild a new Cathedral was made the day after the destruction of the old, although it was sixteen years before the foundation stone was laid. Six years later, in 1962, the Consecration Service was held.

Today, the Queen's Steps lead the visitor from the Ruins to the canopied porch, and to the new Cathedral of St. Michael. The main entrance is on the South Side where a huge, bronze sculpture of St. Michael subduing the Devil is fastened to the outer wall.

Having visited many medieval Cathedrals and been wrapped by the cloak of serenity, spirituality and sanctity, I was totally unprepared for the utter shock that came as I stood in this modern Coventry Cathedral. The colours of the new glass seemed garish; the prolific use of bronze and other metals brought eerie glistenings in unexpected places; the fittings and furnishings were either too stark and bare or overly ornate; the figures seemed mostly dehumanized - either bloated or anorexic. I was so shaken by outward appearances that I did not try to understand meaning or symbolism, nor the theme of 'Resurrection through Sacrifice' repeated throughout the interior.

Bewildered, dismayed, confused, I walked away from my companions and found myself wandering alone behind the High Altar, trying to come to terms with the situation. I came across a small Chapel - 'The Chapel of Christ in Gethsemane'. At the entrance was a beautiful, wrought-iron, circular grill symbolizing the Crown of Thorns. This made a frame for the reredos depicting Our Lord kneeling on one knee, holding a Chalice, while a blue, mosaic panel to the right depicted the three sleeping disciples. I do not know whether it was a feat of engineering, or if it was from an outer source of light from a hidden window, or a figment

of my imagination, but there was an iridescent glow emanating from the Chalice.

Three years later I revisited Coventry Cathedral, this time with a different approach. There was no initial shock and I was able to enjoy and appreciate the workmanship and symbolism, and the beauty of a truly modern Cathedral with the basic theme of 'Christian Unity'. Indeed, there is a 'Chapel of Unity' with slender windows, a gift of the German Evangelical churches, and a marble mosaic floor given by the people of Sweden. I was awed by the curved Baptistry Window of modern stained glass and stone reaching from floor to roof, and flooding the nave with a blaze of colour. Below it, in utter simplicity, was the Font - a huge boulder roughly hewn from a hillside in the Valley of Blessedness, Bethlehem. Yes, I revisited the 'Chapel of Christ in Gethsemane' but was my imagination playing tricks again for the glow from the Chalice did not seem as bright as I remembered?

Medieval Cathedrals will always have that especial aura, and always be works of wonder as to how their magnificence was achieved without all the facilities of present day engineering, but this modern Cathedral will always have a special place, for donations, large and small, and in a variety of unexpected ways came from all over the world. Modern Coventry Cathedral is truly a Cathedral of Universal Christian Unity.

By Helen E. Glover

Fr. Rodney Brazill

RESQUIAT IN PACE

Father Rodney was a good friend to St. Edmund's and to me personally. He first celebrated the Holy Mysteries for us on St. Michael and all Angels, 1998. From then on his name regularly appears in the Vestry Book at most of our mid-week Holy Day celebrations despite the distance from Oshawa to Waterloo and often inclement weather conditions.

His visits to us ended on St. Bartholomew, 2000, when his health finally insisted that he take things easier. Our connection did not end there; we know that we were in his prayers until the end, as was he in ours. Both written and by telephone, communication continued.

We are pleased that a significant contingent from St. Edmund's attended the Requiem Mass celebrated by Bishop Mercer with the homily delivered by

Bishop Woolcock on 17th April. Fr. Rodney's popularity was attested to by the good attendance of a crowd representative of many organisations and churches from the Oshawa and surrounding area.

"Well done thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord."

By The Reverend Mervyn Edward Bowles

ANZAC Commemoration in Canada

What Beauhamel is to Newfoundland, what Vimy Ridge is to the rest of Canada, what Delville Wood is to South Africa, so is Gallipoli to the Antipodes. During the First World War soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps fell by the thousand trying to take the Dardenelles from Turkey. This disastrous battle took place on St Mark's day, April 25, which ever since has been solemnly observed Down Under as ANZAC day.

Father Graham Eglington, the new rector of St Mark's in Toronto, is an Australian who came to Canada in the late 1960's to teach constitutional law at Carleton University in Ottawa. He stayed on to work in immigration courts, to write opinions for the Senate of Canada, and to work full time as National Director of the Prayer Book Society. A native of Grafton diocese, he attended school and university in Sydney and was called to the bar in New South Wales. He later read more law in London University in England.

This year Fr Eglington included a commemoration of ANZAC in his patronal festival. Bishop Alfred Woolcock CD*, a much loved zone padre to the Royal Canadian Legion, presided over the commemoration. "O Valiant hearts" and "The Queen" were sung. A blind trumpeter blew Last Post, Reveille and a fanfare to announce the arrival of the diocesan bishop, Robert Mercer CR, who celebrated a sung eucharist. The preacher was the Revd James Cairns, pastor of the Baptist church, whose buildings we use. He urged the Anglican Catholic congregation to be faithful to Jesus despite all hardships. St Mark, who had twice run away, eventually became an evangelist and a hero. Several Baptists who had attended the service said they were deeply impressed by the Anglican mass.

+Robert Mercer CR

* Canadian Decoration

(The above is a copy of a fax from The Bishop to Father Owen Buckton, editor of *The Messenger*)

Worth thinking about

- ⊗ Archbishop Martino remarked that, as Holy See observer to the U.N. for 15 years, he has "seen first hand how pro-abortion groups attempt to impose their death-dealing agenda on the Family of Nations. Make no mistake about it, there are powerful groups throughout the world lobbying to make abortion a human right, to destroy the cherished institution of the family, to dissolve the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents, and to portray motherhood as an outdated and oppressive vocation as well as pregnancy as a disturbing sickness."
- ⊗ He always was, He always is, and He always will be . . . Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, and never Undone.
- ⊗ The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in time of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321)
- ⊗ The paradigmatic notion of liberal humanism is that people are essentially good. The paradigmatic message of Christianity is that we are such incorrigible sinners (i.e. rotten to the core) that God Himself took the extreme measure of becoming a man, dying, and rising from the dead to save us from our sinful natures.

The Goddess Unmasked

Since Wicca and "goddess spirituality" emerged as significant cultural phenomena beginning some 25 years ago, I've been inclined to regard them as more a feminist-humanist fashion statement - cocking a snook at perceived Judeo-Christian traditionalism and "patriarchy" - rather than a real expression of religious belief.

Wiccans, goddess cultists, and other neopagans, estimated to number some 200,000 in the US, and presumably proportional demographics in Canada and the UK, are almost exclusively white, middle-class, well-educated (a friend of mine would say "educated beyond their intelligence"), and politically engaged in the liberal-left causes, with no familial or cultural background in pagan religion.

However, I had, until recently, assumed that these people were at least selectively latching onto real ancient pagan rituals and teachings. Certainly that is what they have claimed, asserting that witchcraft is "perhaps the oldest religion extant in the West", with beginnings "more than 35,000 years ago".

Neopagans assert that a peaceful, environmentally conscious, woman-respecting, and egalitarian culture existed in what became Western Europe for thousands of years until barbarians and Christians invaded with their warrior gods, weapons of war, and patriarchy.

Of course, some neopagan claims have always been obviously far-fetched, especially the notion of the so-called "Burning Times", allegedly beginning around the 14th Century, when some 9 million witches and pagans were supposedly executed. For such a holocaust to have been perpetrated and ignored and/or covered up by historians beggars credulity, and then some, even if there had been 9 million pagans in Medieval and Renaissance Christian Europe, also unbelievable.

I just dismissed the "Burning Times" myth and inflated numbers as typical leftist-feminist revisionism and propagandizing - a politically-nuanced exaggeration of historically documented persecution of alleged witches during that period.

However, a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly* by Charlotte Allen, senior editor of *Crisis* magazine, calls even the most tenuous connection of the modern neopagan movement to real religions of antiquity into question.

"Historically speaking", Allen writes, "the 'ancient' rituals of the Goddess movement are almost certainly bunk."

"In all probability", she declares, "not a single element of the Wiccan story is true. The evidence is overwhelming that Wicca is a distinctly modern religion, a 1950s concoction influenced by such things as Masonic ritual and a late nineteenth century fascination with the esoteric and the occult, and that various assumptions informing the Wiccan view of history are deeply flawed."

In addition, Allen notes that there is general agreement among legitimate scholars that there is no archaeological or documentary evidence that any ancient people ever worshipped to a single, archetypal goddess.

In short, not only are Wicca and Neopaganism affectations of the postmodern, leftist, feminist movement, but are in fact contrived inventions of that faction, based not in ancient traditions, but in dotty late nineteenth century Romanticism.

Allen cites the 1998 book "Goddess Unmasked: The Rise of Neopagan Feminist Spirituality" by University of Prince Edward Island professor of religion, Philip G. Davis, in which he argues that Wicca was concocted by English Civil servant Gerald B. Gardner (1884-1964) out of notions culled from the German and French romantics, the Rosicrucians, and Freemasonry (the Masonic linkage would seem to be the movement's only legitimate link to antiquity, but of course the Masons were all men). Gardner coined the term Wica (sic) during the 1950s, and according to Davis, invented rites based partly on rituals borrowed from contemporary British occultist Aleister Crowley, intertwined with his own enthusiasm for nudism - he was a former member of a nudist colony. Ritual sex was another Gardnerian embellishment.

Another scholarly work and cited by Allen in her withering deconstruction of neopagan flummery, is "The Triumph of the Moon" by Ronald Hutton, a religion historian at the University of Bristol, who, says Allen, "effectively demolished the notion, held by Wiccans and others, that fundamentally pagan ancient customs existed beneath Medieval Christian practices". According to Allen, "there is now widespread consensus among historians that Catholicism thoroughly permeated the mental world of medieval Europe. The idea that medieval revels were pagan in origin is a legacy of the Protestant Reformation". Hutton told Allen that "There is still no proven pagan feast that stood as an ancestor to Easter" - the latter notion is one that even many Christians have accepted as conventional wisdom.

Of course, as a serious Christian, I don't need convincing that Wicca/Neopaganism are based in false belief, but it is delicious to see them exposed as such banal and make-believe fabrication of the basis at historic research as well as personal faith.

The neopagans are really just the latest iteration of the old Gnostic heresies, essentially the humanist liberal notion that religion can and should be a reflection of what its adherents want it to be, rather than absolute and objective truth revealed by a demanding and omnipotent Creator.

By Charles W. Moore - published in The Western Catholic Reporter April 3, 2001

From here and there

- Why do people, on their trunk, advertise the name of the dealer where they bought their car - for free?
- Content thyself to be obscurely good. When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway, the post of honour is a private station. Joseph Addison
- When Mum and Dad get upset, they become Dum and Mad.
- For ice hockey fans - the phrase 'hat trick' dates to 19th century cricket when a bowler was permitted to pass his hat upon taking three wickets with three successive balls.
- Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you wish to test a man's character, give him power. Abraham Lincoln
- Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. Will Durant

Mary and Martha

There is one account in the Bible which has always intrigued me and that is the story recounted in the 10th chapter of St. Luke, v. 38 - 42.

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

But Martha was distracted with much serving, and approached Him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me".

And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her".

I'm sure we have all heard this many times. In fact, it has almost become a cliché when speaking of Christian women - and not of women alone, but of Christians in general although it is usually brought up in the context of women's work.

Mary is the symbol and patron of those who pray, sing, and study the word of God while Martha is the one stuck in the kitchen making kibbee and fatayer for the festival.

Martha does seem to be the activist in the family. It is she who runs to greet Jesus when he comes to Bethany at the time of Lazarus' death. It is she who expresses her faith in Jesus when she says, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now, I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give to you".

Then, when Jesus tells her that Lazarus would rise again, she says that she knows He will rise again in the general resurrection. And then Jesus reveals to Martha, to the one who does the humble, daily tasks, exactly who He is by telling her: "I am the Resurrection and the Life; He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die". Then Jesus asks Martha, "Do you believe this?" And Martha answers, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, Who is to come into the world" (John, Chapter 11). Having said this, having affirmed her faith, Martha returns to her home, where Mary is sitting with those who have come to offer condolences, and tells her sister that Jesus is calling for her, and they return together and witness the resurrection of their brother.

St. John identifies Mary as the women who "anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair", apparently referring to the incident described in Luke, Chapter 11, v. 36 ff. Not all scholars agree that Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus, is the woman referred to here. However, the compilers of the Akathist to Mary and Martha certainly do, for they said in Ikos IX, "Rejoice, O Mary, who anointed the feet of sweetest Jesus with precious spikenard."

For me, this identification somehow brings the little family in Bethany into focus, making them real people with real problems. It might explain, perhaps, why three adult siblings were living together at a time when almost everyone was expected to be married. If Mary of Bethany was indeed a repentant sinner, taken in by her brother and sister, they would themselves be outcasts in that society, and it would not be surprising that

Jesus, who made a point of befriending those on the fringes, would become a special friend to them. I can also understand Martha a little better. She herself has a deep yearning to sit at Christ's feet and learn from Him, yet there is Mary, the repentant sinner who, instead of making amends for all the trouble she's caused, has taken the choice place at Jesus' feet. It reminds me of the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son. It is the same psychology.

So why did Jesus give such a "put-down" to Martha? The resurrection of Lazarus is described in the Gospel of St. John, and the account of the meal at which Martha served and Mary sat at Jesus' feet is given by St. Luke, so we don't know the chronology of the two incidents. Did Martha give her ringing affirmation of faith before the dinner described by Luke - or was it inspired by something that occurred at the dinner? Again, it is one of those things which we do not know. Perhaps Jesus knew that Mary needed Him more at that moment than did Martha. I don't know - and if we are permitted to ask questions once we reach the Kingdom of Heaven, that is one I would like to ask. I would like to ask it because I have a feeling that the whole story did not get passed down to us. Did not Jesus realize that Martha was really crying out, "I, too, want to sit at Your feet and listen?" Instead of being remembered for her affirmation of Jesus as the Christ, Martha is remembered as the one who wanted to drag her sister away from Him.



These are the questions that come to my mind and I am sure that there is more to the story than we are told. It is true that Martha was probably fussing too much. Given the tradition of Middle Eastern hospitality, it is not surprising that she wanted to go all out for the guest she acknowledged as the Christ. Which of us would do any less? What happened next? Did Martha leave the kitchen and join Mary at Jesus' feet? Did she content herself with serving one dish instead of two or three? Was she offended, or embarrassed? Or did Jesus convey to her somehow that her

homemaking skills were valued but that she should give herself permission to listen to the word of God? We are not told. Being men, the evangelists may not have been sensitive to these issues, or perhaps the rest of the story was lost in its journey through time. There seems to be something unfinished about it.

Although we cannot know more than the scriptures tell us, there is, nevertheless, much we can learn from the story of Mary and Martha. First of all, we must recognize that there is a Mary AND a Martha in each of us. While we bake and sweep and sew, we must also nurture our souls. We must support one another and encourage each other to take time to be with the Lord, not only by participating in the Liturgy and other services, but by study and meditation. When we speak of Mary and Martha, we must not stereotype ourselves - "so-and-so is a Mary but that one is a Martha". Each of us is Mary AND Martha. I think Mary and Martha are the two sides of the Christian coin. While we must be active in doing our Christian work, we must not neglect prayer and study. Sometimes it is hard to balance the two, but we must try. We must not forget that it was Martha, the worker, who recognized and affirmed Jesus as the Christ. And we must also remember, activities are not the main thing in our life but what is important is always to be attuned to Christ.

By Natalie Ashanin in the March 2001 issue of *The Word*

Assisted suicide no Dutch treat

Last week [this article was written on April 21, 2001], the nation whose artists once inspired humanity found a less noble calling for its physicians. As 10,000 protested in The Hague, the Dutch parliament voted to formalize doctor-assisted suicide, a depravity tolerated for decades.

The Netherlands has legalized prostitution and addiction. For a society that's overdosing on tolerance, government-sanctioned mercy killing is a logical step.

But, the Dutch aren't alone. Medical murder has found a foothold in Oregon. Since 1997, when Oregonians legalized doctor-assisted suicide, 70 citizens have ended their lives with their physician's active support.

The movement is advancing nationwide. In January, an assisted-suicide bill was introduced in

Hawaii's legislature, by the senate president no less. The Alaska Supreme Court will soon rule on whether there is a right to what's called death with dignity under that state's constitution.

On the positive side, Attorney General John Ashcroft has an opportunity to reverse his predecessor's decision and allow the Drug Enforcement Administration to revoke the licenses to prescribe federally controlled drugs of Oregon physicians who use that power to kill.

The Dutch euthanasia law has formalized impressive-sounding safeguards, which were in effect for 20 years.

In reality, the guidelines offer all the protection of a lean-to in a hurricane. Physicians are told to be sure the patient's decision is voluntary and well-considered. The death wish is supposed to be a last resort for terminal patients with pain that can't be alleviated. The medical hitman needs the concurrence of an independent physician.

But the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide (a leading opponent) notes that in Holland roughly 20 percent of euthanized patients did not consent. Some were comatose, others incompetent. A 1997 article in a British medical journal found that 8 percent of the infants who die in the Netherlands are killed by their doctors.

Frequently, patients are not informed of the full range of treatment options. The consulting physician often turns out to be an associate of the man with the syringe. There are no recorded instances of the consultant disagreeing with the initial diagnosis.

The Dutch body count includes non-terminal patients. Among the victims are a man who was HIV-positive, but hadn't developed full-blown AIDS and could have lived for years relatively free of pain. An otherwise healthy woman, depressed over the death of her two children, was killed by a general practitioner.

None of these slayings outside the hallowed, then-unofficial guidelines were prosecuted. There's no reason to believe the official regulations will be adhered to more scrupulously. The Dutch are into facilitating death, not erecting meaningful barriers to compassion-icide.

In America, assisted-suicide is on the same track as abortion was 30 years ago. Abortion was legalized by one state (Washington) before it went national. Fortunately, in *Washington vs. Glucksberg*, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a First Amendment right to euthanasia. But, proponents will try to get recognition of a right-to-die from state courts, witness the pending Alaska case.

The Kevorkian cadre argues the hard cases - like the terminal cancer patient in excruciating pain. Roe proponents did the same, using rape, incest and fetal deformity to secure an unrestricted right to abortion.

Today, we have the harvesting of fetal body parts, partial-birth abortion, growing acceptance of infanticide and other horrors undreamed of when legalizing abortion was debated. Is it alarmist to imagine the same progression if euthanasia achieves a secured beachhead in our culture?

The portion of our over-65 population is expected to grow from 12.7 percent in 2000 to 20.5 percent in 2040. Its health costs are rising

commensurately. Medical murder could easily become a convenient way to hold down expenditures on the elderly.

In his 1998 book, "Freedom to Die", Hemlock Society founder Derek Humphry muses, "Is there in fact a duty to die - a responsibility within the family unit - that should remain voluntary but expected nonetheless." Dutch Health Minister Els Borst says she isn't opposed to providing suicide pills for seniors "who have had enough of living". (Think of the money they'll save.) Humphrey writes, "Economic reality, therefore, is the main answer to the question, Why not now?"

If the Dutch disease spreads beyond Oregon, we'll be hearing such morbid speculation with increasing frequency.

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