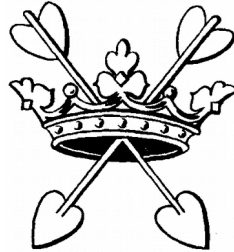


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr (Waterloo, Ontario)



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

UPDATE

November 9, 2004 - **St. Willibrord, Bishop of Utrecht**

December Schedule

December 5	Sunday Advent	-	The Second Sunday in
December 8	Wednesday	-	The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 12	Sunday Advent	-	The Third Sunday in
December 19	Sunday Advent	-	The Fourth Sunday in
December 21	Tuesday Apostle	-	St. Thomas the
December 24	Friday	-	Christmas Eve
December 26	Sunday	-	St. Stephen the Martyr
December 27	Monday	-	St. John the Evangelist
December 28	Tuesday	-	The Holy Innocents

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.

Notes and Comments

1) A couple of dates to remember:

(a) **November 20** (Saturday) - **St. Edmund's Day - The Bishop will be celebrating Mass (10:30) and preaching.**

(b) **November 21** (therefore, Sunday) - **The Bishop will be confirming and preaching.**

Lunch and an opportunity to visit with The Bishop will follow the Masses on both days.

2) Our Ordinary's ***Bit - Asking for this and that*** - this page.

3) The second of six parts of an address given at the recent Essentials Conference - ***Ecclesial Existence Today*** - see page 3.

4) ***"Sin" or "Sins"*** - two responses to my question in the August UPDATE - see page 5.

5) Giving a **minimum of \$1** each week for every \$1,000 of annual income approximates tithing - i.e. if your gross annual income is \$50,000, your weekly offering would be \$50. Remember your alms-giving is not just for the Parish, but more importantly for the Diocese, and for Mission work! See Fr. Dunbar's piece - ***Money, Christian Faith and the Prayer Book*** - page 7.

6) A basket of "isms" - ***Obstacles to Anglican Unity*** - see page 9.

The Bishop's Bit

Asking for this and that

A sermon preached in St Edmund's on Rogation Sunday this year.

My texts are two: (1) "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." (2) "I am the Ground of thy beseeching".

The first text comes of course from the Bible, and is well known. Jesus tells the apostles to baptize converts in the name of the three Persons of the Trinity (*Matthew 28,19*).

The second text comes not from Holy Scripture but from Julian. Strictly speaking, therefore, it can not be a text. It constitutes good advice, wise opinion, but it is not authoritative over us as the Bible is authoritative. Julian lived in the 14th century in the city of Norwich in the county of Norfolk. She was a solitary, a hermit, withdrawn from ordinary life in order to concentrate on prayer. She had a vision of our crucified Lord. She thought and thought about that vision. Her thoughts turned into a book, *Revelations of Divine Love*. It is one of the great classics of Christendom, and has brought encouragement to thousands for some six hundred years. Students of medieval English literature who are not necessarily Christian believers, are often required to know it in the original. I am sure Father *Sean Henry* does. But modern English versions are available in paper back. My quotation comes from *Revelation* number 14, chapter 6, paragraph 3. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching". We nickname the author *Dame Julian* of Norwich, or the *Lady Julian* or *Mother Julian*.

Today is Rogation Sunday. I wish therefore to preach, not about baptism, nor about Lady Julian, but about asking prayer. Rogo is Latin for I ask. But obviously baptism and Julian figure in the story.

1. Prayer is not telling God things He doesn't know. Little Susie has just learned how to count up to 10, and does so to the delight of her mother. Mom is thrilled, not because she herself is ignorant of numbers, but because she loves her daughter. We can tell God things, not because He is ignorant, but because He is love. So, if ever you have an urge not to instruct God, not to explain things to God, obey that urge. The Omniscient knows. On the other hand, if you have an urge to tell, do so. God will be delighted, not because He needs

lessons, but because He loves you. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching".

2. Prayer is not bending God to your will, persuading a reluctant God to change His mind. For example, at Calvary Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do" (*Luke 23,34*). Jesus and His Father are not at cross purposes. Jesus only prays this because He expresses what is already His Father's will. So, if you pray, "God heal Susie, Rest eternal grant Susie, Convert Susie", whatever, you are expressing the will of your heavenly Father. You are not bringing a reluctant God round to your point of view. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching".

3. Prayer does not empower or enable God. Poor God, He's rather helpless, but if I pray, or better still, if we all pray together, God will be able to heal Susie, give her rest eternal, convert her, whatever. But the Omnipotent can do. So, if the Omnipotent chooses not to intervene with a miracle, as when He chose not to save Stephen from death by stoning, or when He chose not to remove Paul's thorn in the flesh (*II Corinthians 12, 7 - 10*), God will manage without any help from you. Nevertheless, even if you are confused or swollen headed God will not despise your request. He is still love. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching."

To understand prayer you must first understand the Trinity. You will never understand the Trinity. Therefore you will never understand prayer.

However, you can experience prayer. You can drive a car without understanding the internal combustion engine. You can turn switches on and off without knowing what electricity is.

This much about prayer you can understand. Prayer means sharing in the love among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching". The Father Loves His Son. The Son loves His Father. The Spirit is the exchange of love between Them.

And you are part of the Son. By baptism and grace you are in Christ. Because the Spirit proceeds from Father to Son, you receive the Spirit. Because the Spirit is in the Son, the Spirit is in you. When you pray, "God bless Susie", the will of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is expressed in your heart, mind and voice. You are not intervening between God and Susie on Susie's behalf. The Trinity loves Susie, knows more about Susie, understands Susie, better than you ever could. Because Jesus has united you with His humanity, and taken you up into the Trinity, a little of the Trinity's love for Susie is now in you. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching". Prayer is not your attempt to get God involved. Prayer is the result of God involving you in Himself.

When you pray, "God bless Susie", you are truly acting in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. "I am the Ground of thy beseeching".

So, glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

+Robert Mercer CR

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

Ecclesial Existence Today - 2 of 6

The Loss of Evangelical Insight

Let me say at once that it is incidental that the creatures immediately at issue in our church crisis happen to be homosexuals. It is incidental, that is, to the gospel; for God loves all his creatures, including those of homosexual inclination, with perfect consistency and the mission of Jesus Christ is a mission to homosexuals and heterosexuals alike. It is not incidental, however, to our culture or to our society's indifference to the love of God. For it is in rejection of the glory and love of God that human beings and whole societies are cast back, not upon a covenant of divine grace, but upon their

own resources for salvation. The celebration of homosexuality is one tell-tale consequence of this rejection, as St Paul reminded the Romans. So, we may add, is the shift in the church from the language of grace and of covenant obligations to the language of rights (neither discourse being well-understood even in the church).

Now it disturbs me greatly that love for our neighbours, which to be authentic must flow from love for God, has fallen so low that we have become almost incapable even of that rational concern that still marks thoughtful non-Christians. One often looks in vain, in our internal debates about homosexuality, for patient and careful questioning of popular assumptions about human psychology and biology, equality rights, the rights and welfare and education of children, the contraceptive mentality, etc., or for serious analysis of public policy questions related to the enormous cultural disaster that is same-sex marriage.⁵ No, in the Anglican Church we are all "heart" and "compassion" - treacherous ideals when detached from reason, never mind from the gospel - hence all disjointed anecdotes and non sequiturs.⁶ But much more disturbing still is the fact that we seem to have become incapable of genuinely evangelical thought, of thought liberated through obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our lack of due diligence on the homosexual question is merely a symptom of the fact that our culture's indifference to God's love has infected the Anglican Church of Canada, calling into question its right to call itself "church."

That, no doubt, is why we foolishly attribute the present crisis to all the wrong causes: Liberals, so-called, to the intolerance of social conservatives, especially those of a supposedly fundamentalist bent; or to a conflict of interest between the church in enlightened democratic societies and the church in non-western cultures marked by patriarchy and homophobia; or even to a conflict of love, love for homosexual friends near to hand and for our many brethren out there in the "developing"

world. The first of these charges is no more than the pot calling the kettle black; the second, its moment of truth notwithstanding, comes from a culture blinded by the beam in its own eye; the third, if not darkest cynicism, is dereliction of duty, for it begs the obvious question. What is love, Christianly speaking, and what should love do?

Conservatives - even the very label betrays them. What has conservatism to do with the gospel? Conservatism, as Oliver O'Donovan remarks, is an attempt "to tame the apocalyptic strength of novelty to the point where it can be managed by a comfortable process of adaptation."⁷ That may describe well enough the labours of Lambeth Palace, or even of Church House in Toronto, but it can hardly describe those who take their cue from the good news of the resurrection of the Crucified. "Conservative evangelical" is an oxymoron. Unfortunately such conflicted creatures do exist, and, like their traditionalist comrades, they often attribute the crisis in the church to its failure to be properly Anglican (by which they mean properly biblical, though on their side it is not always made clear whether and how scripture, tradition and reason cohere).⁸ They thus invite, and may even deserve, the taunt from the synodic majority and from its lawyers - "Who owns the church?"⁹

This very question, however, may serve to call us back to evangelical thinking. The church is the community of the covenant that is grounded in Jesus Christ. As such, it is the church of God and of this Man - not your church or my church or even our church. If it is in crisis, its crisis can only be a crisis of the gospel. If the issue of homosexuality will not submit to analysis in gospel terms, then leave it to the real conservatives; that is, to those responsible for a comfortable process of adaptation.¹⁰

And yet it does submit. "We affirm the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same-sex relationships": when this resolution is measured against the gospel

we discover that it amounts to an anti-gospel; when we think about it ecclesiologically we discover that it rests on a premise hostile to the very being of the church.

By **Douglas Farrow** - Associate Professor of Christian Thought at McGill University, Montreal

⁵ On which see especially *Divorcing Marriage: Unveiling the Dangers in Canada's New Social Experiment*, ed. D. Cere and D. Farrow (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).

⁶ If you seek an illustration, I point you to an embarrassingly inadequate analysis in the *National Post*, written by one who should have known better: see Ted Scott, "Why I cannot accept the Pope's Invitation" (5 January 2004).

⁷ *Resurrection and Moral Order* (Eerdmans 1986), 185.

⁸ Or whether we should follow St Paul in fingering the collapse of reason as the final failure of same-sex proponents; cf. Rom. 1:22.

⁹ See e.g., David Cook, "Whose is the Episcopal Church?" (www.rci.rutgers.edu/~crew/dojustice/j201.Htm1)

¹⁰ In a penetrating critique of an earlier Oxford moralist, Bishop Kenneth Kirk, O'Donovan observes that the genius of institutional conservatism "is its admiration for the adaptability of tradition, its delight in social institutions which can float gloriously down the stream of time, negotiating all its bends without accident" (op cit. 167). Seen in this light, what is happening to the good ship Anglican is not a result of the triumph of the liberals, as many suppose, but of the conservatives. In North America the ship's senior officers, such as Captain Griswold and First Mate Michael Ingham, are simply trying to steer it free of a local peril posed by social change. On their view, the homosexual bend in the river of western culture might have been negotiated without so much as scraping the Anglican's hull, were it not for unruly evangelicals making the ship difficult to manoeuvre. That problem can doubtless be solved, however, by disembarking the ring-leaders and lightening the ship, which can then be floated back into the main current.

"Sin" or "Sins"?

In the August 4, 2004 UPDATE, I made the following statements and asked for comments: "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". Two comments were received, one from the Rural Dean and one from the Chancellor (thank-you, gentlemen):

From The Rural Dean (in an email dated August 9, 2004):

Here are a few rambling thoughts off the top of my head.

The places where I recall this change being made are specifically those where "sin" is linked to the "world", such as the Gloria and the Agnus Dei (both at Mass and in the Litany).

There are other places such as the Canon of the Mass - both in the second paragraph in the words of Jesus at the consecration of the Precious Blood and in the third paragraph where the prayer reads, "we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion" - where the plural is used.

The Creeds, Confessions, and Absolutions still identify our "sins" in the plural.

In the Last Gospel, i.e., that of Christmas Day, from the Prologue of St. John's Gospel, St. John draws the distinction between "the world" and those who receive him who were given "the power to become the sons of God." The world is all that is opposed to God. Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, in whom dwelt the fullness of the godhead corporally, has broken the "sin of the world" and now we can have "the power to become the sons of God".

Sin has been variously described as "that which separates us from God", "transgressions", "missing the mark."

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

Like the Invocations in the Collects, this describes an attribute of God - the divine

side - which in this case is to take away whatever separates us as a race from God.

Where the Prayer Book refers to our human side, whether by commission (forgive us our sins) or by application (the remission of sins) it invariably refers to our sins in the plural.

St. Paul speaks of the relationship between sin and death in Romans 5ff. Essentially, fear of death causes us to sin.

In the context of a discussion about baptism Paul explains that "he that is dead is freed from sin". He continues, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Having made statements about Baptism and our freedom from sin, Paul then exhorts his readers, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof;" i.e., Do NOT commit sins. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6.23)

Because we have received Christ we ought not to fear death. Eternity should rule in your hearts; therefore we ought not to sin.

St. Peter when he walked on the water toward Jesus started to sink once his eyes were off Jesus. (An aside: Water is a whole lot easier to walk on when it is frozen solid.) Sin is easier not to commit when our eyes are fixed on Jesus. Would that we were perfect! We aren't. St. John reminds us that, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins."

"SIN" having been destroyed, "sins" can be forgiven.

(The Reverend Robert S. H. Mansfield, SSC)

From The Chancellor (in an email dated August 19, 2004):

As to "the sin(s) of the world", we have discussed this before. The only other Prayer Book which changed "sins" to "sin" was the Indian, after the break up of the Church for the whole sub-continent (India, Burma and Ceylon) on independence. This book was in a sense contemporary with the last Canadian revision (the first draft Canadian Communion rite was published in 1952). It influenced the Canadian revisers as did the argument for the change in India, namely that the change to the singular emphasised Christ's atonement as a once-for-all act of redemption rather than as a continuing act of forgiveness for the sins of individuals. This change was made in the historic "Agnus Dei" when it was restored to the rite, from which it had been absent since 1552, and the consequential change made also in the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo". The 1549 Book had "synnes" in both the Agnus Dei and the Gloria, and the plural was continued in the Gloria from 1552 through to the current English Book of 1662. The plural was employed also in the Deposited Book of 1928, as it is in the US Book of the same year. The plural is an accurate translation of the Latin text in both instances; it had "peccata mundi", "peccata" being the plural of "peccatum", a third declension noun like forum. The original of the Gloria is in Greek and it is my understanding that it employed the plural also.

Argument about the doctrine of the atonement is perpetual and intense, but what the Canadian revisers presumably did not realise (perhaps because of their advanced ages) was that very soon after 1952 and 1959, the idea would gain common currency that sin was something systemic out in the world, something environmental which impacted on individuals. Consequently, individuals were not as responsible as hitherto supposed for their individual misdeeds. Thus began the lessening of the idea of human sins, and the lessening of any idea of individual guilt and of the need for the forgiveness of a just God. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that our Canadian Book appears to lend support to this view. It may be that our revisers did realise what

was happening to the idea of sin, and agreed with it. They did water down the confession also.

Incidentally, there are some who seem to believe that the Gloria in Excelsis in the English Prayer Book always said "sin" in the singular, eg W.R. Blott at page 127 of "Blessing and Thanksgiving: The Growth of a Canadian Liturgy". But he and they are mistaken.

(The Reverend Graham C. Eglington)

From here and there

1) A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

2) With the presidential election just weeks away, more Catholic bishops are speaking out about political issues, including communion, abortion and voting. Last week, **Archbishop John Donoghue** of Atlanta reminded Catholic voters that those who vote for pro-abortion politicians are guilty of "cooperating with the evil" of abortion. "You have an erroneous conscience if you think there is some case in which you can vote for a pro-abortion candidate." Archbishop Donoghue said in an interview. "You're wrong as far as church teaching is concerned." "The Church holds her members to acceptance, complete acceptance of her teaching on matters of faith and morals," he said. Meanwhile, **Archbishop John Myers** of Newark, New Jersey, writing in the Wall Street Journal last Friday, said that abortion takes prominence over issues such as the war in Iraq. "Catholics may, in good conscience, support the use of force in Iraq or oppose it," he said. "Abortion and embryo-destructive research are different. They are intrinsic and grave evils; no Catholic may legitimately support them." www.lifenews.com/ - September 29, 2004

3) A priest is ordained to offer the sacrifice to God. His chief duty, his

dearest privilege, is to celebrate Mass. The offering of the Christian Sacrifice is a divine act, but it is done in an entirely human way. Its essential elements were determined by the Chief Priest - who is at the same time the august Victim - our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, but the setting in which this sublime act should take place, the rite in which it was to be enshrined for all time, was left to His Church to settle. And the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, has in the course of centuries created this rite, and has fixed in detail the manner in which Mass is to be celebrated. From the Forward to *The Celebration of Mass* by **The Rev. J.B. O'Connell**

4) By calling our new sexual laxity a revolution, instead of, say, a moral breakdown, we've given it a progressive halo. We've treated the promiscuous as pioneers of love. We've learned to call the promiscuous "sexually active," obscenity "openness," and abortion "choice." And we've elevated people to celebrity for doing things that would once have made them outcasts. **Francis A. Schaeffer**

5) The point of having an open mind, like having an open mouth, is to close it on something solid. **G.K. Chesterton**

6) The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible. **Noah Webster**

Money, Christian Faith and the Prayer Book

There is something of a prejudice against priests talking about money. The clerical mind, it seems, is to rest on higher things, and not descend to filthy lucre. Christ did not seem to have shared this prejudice. He spoke rather frequently about money,

and not because he was worried about institutional expenses, either; he knew that money is a topic of great spiritual importance: "for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6.21). How we use our money is what the economists call a 'leading indicator' to the state of our spiritual economy.

What does Christ have to say about money? First of all, it is a dangerous thing. The idea is foreign to our minds, I am afraid: what could be the problem with money? It offers us power, freedom, security, satisfaction, importance - well yes, and there lies the problem. When we have money - and remember, the 'we' here always refers to corrupted natures - it all too easily disguises from us the plain fact of our dependence upon God and upon one another, for all the good we have and enjoy. It bolsters the sinful heart's fantasies of proud independence from God and man. The American currency says, "In God we trust", but we are tempted to trust in money before God for all our needs, with the result that "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the [seed of God's] word" (Matthew 13.22) which has been sown in the soul. In the inordinate love of money, we worship a false god, Mammon, whose service is incompatible with God's, and who will betray the hopes we place in him.

To prevent ourselves from using money as an instrument of sinful pride, the New Testament teaches us to use it in the service of God instead. The Apostle advises Timothy: "charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded" - he means, haughty, proud, self-important, arrogant, contemptuous of others, and throwing their weight around - "nor trust in uncertain riches [the false god, Mammon], but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [i.e. to share]; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6.10, 17-19). We are not to regard ourselves as owners of money to use as we please; for

God is the Owner. We are its stewards, entrusted by him, with its management, in accordance with his expressed will, and accountable to him for how we use it.

In the apostolic church in Jerusalem, "all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (Acts 2.44, 45). "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" (4.32). Here, in an absolute form - one that inspired the monastic movement and other forms of religious community - is the principle that governs all our use of money. Before God there are no property rights. We are not owners of property and wealth; but stewards, entrusted with its management, in accordance with his expressed will, and accountable to the Owner for how we use it. Private property must be subordinated to the common good, in obedience to the will of God. Indeed, the strong argument for private property is that the common economic good is generally better served by private property than by the well-proven inefficiency of state or communal enterprises.

Even so Christians must not let their private property foster in them some sense of independence from God or indifference to the common good of men. Surely that is why the Reformers placed the collection where they did, right in the middle of the Communion service. The collection of money is not just a utilitarian convenience, you see, it is a religious act, a spiritual exercise. This was clearer in the sixteenth century than it is now; for in those days the clergy were not usually supported by the collection, but by tithes, required from parishioners by law, and paid every quarter. The primary purpose of the collection during service, therefore, was theological and spiritual, not utilitarian - namely, to teach Christians the true use of material goods. Though it now serves for the maintenance of the Church's ministry, that spiritual purpose

remains. Now consider where the collection comes in the Communion service: after the gospel, the Creed, and the sermon, which nourish our faith. It is by faith in God that we are saved; but "faith without works is dead"; so after instruction in faith, faith goes to work, in the good works of hope and charity, the offering of money as "alms and oblations", for the relief of the needy and the work of the Church. To put it in a down-to-earth way, if faith is what we believe in our hearts, and confess with our lips, the good works of hope and charity that spring from faith, are in large part what we do with money. To continue in this down-to-earth strain, it is in money that the rubber hits the road. Or as Margaret Thatcher said, with characteristic bluntness, "No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions. He had money as well." And he spent it.

What we learn from the Offertory, then, is to use the money that so easily bolsters our proud fantasies of independence from God and our neighbour, in the service of God and our neighbour. It is significant, that after offering our money, we offer our prayers, for the whole state of Christ's Church, asking God first of all, that he inspire proud and cantankerous sinners joined together in the Church "with the spirit of unity, peace, and concord", "that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live together in unity and godly love". The logic is clear: by the mortification of pride and exercise of charity in the offering of money, we open ourselves to the divine Spirit of unity. It may seem rather audacious for churches to ask members to pledge contributions of money at a time when trouble in the stock market and the job market means that there is less of it to go around. And yet there is never a better time to give, than when giving is not easy. Remember Jesus' praise for the poor widow, whose two mites seemed so very little compared to the lavish sums dropped by more affluent givers: "for all these of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had" (Luke 21.4). I would go so

far as to say, that the gift of money that does not involve a measure of costly self-denial, may do some good for the Church's coffers, but little for our soul. Money we miss very little means very little; money that requires sacrificial self-denial to give means very much. It shows that the work of the Church is not just a frill, a luxury, even a convenience, but a necessity, an essential thing, a matter of priority. When our offering is a priority, a pledge requiring sacrificial commitment to fulfil, putting pressure on the rest of our spending or saving habits, then it begins to shape our souls for the better, then it erodes worldly pride and deepens faith, as we invest ourselves more completely in God. Then it does what sacrifice is meant to do; it unites us more closely to him.

The Church's legitimate need for money to underwrite the expenses of its ministry must carry great weight with any true Churchman. In relation to money, however, there is one pressing and personal need, which comes before anything else, even the need of the Church for our money - and that is our need to give it away. In terms of money, it is our deepest need - "to spend and be spent" (2 Cor. 12.15). Hard work, an honest profit, money to look after ourselves and our families, money to invest in productive enterprises, these are necessary and honourable things; yet they are not enough; they do not suffice. We profit most from our money by giving it away, with sacrificial generosity, and putting it to work in the service of God. In the end, that is what money is good for.

By **The Reverend Gavin Dunbar**, Vicar of St. John's Church, Savannah, Georgia - from the Winter 2002 issue of *The Anglican Free Press*

Obstacles to Anglican Unity

A basket of "isms"

It takes a tremendous effort to separate biblical Christianity from the ideologies that rule the secular world around us. Modernism, feminism, clericalism, and

individualism, for example, have all done their part to divide the Church.

Modernism tells us that we know better than the past, and that we are better or different from the people of the past. From these modernist presuppositions, even when they are held by those who otherwise call themselves "conservatives," come claims that we must have today different doctrines and moralities than those of the ancient Church (which now seems to mean the Church before 1976). But once the God-given-ness of morality in one area is questioned, as in the Church's standards of marital discipline, it follows that moral discipline in other matters may also be open to question and revision, as it has been in the case of homosexuality.

People will not live and die, let alone unite, for flexible, changeable, part-timer truths. The churches within the Anglican Communion that are growing are those that stand on the permanent Truth of God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures and his Son Jesus Christ. If American Anglicans are to grow, and to grow together, the same must be true of us.

In like manner, the problem with feminism is not its appeal for justice to women, but its claim that human nature in general is open to philosophical and political adjustment. While justice for all is an immutable demand of Scriptural revelation, the feminist belief that men and women make themselves what they are, and that they can choose to make themselves interchangeable, is a denial of the biblical doctrine of creation. A church that seeks the divine gift of unity must begin by humbly admitting, "it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." Only then will that church be able to become what God has created and called it to be.

Clericalism ultimately reduces itself to the claim that only members of the clergy are competent Christians. This false belief, when put into action, results either in a dictatorship of the clergy, or in the effort to give every member of the Church some

sort of quasi-clerical status. What gets lost in the process is the biblical order of the Church and any sense that what we do is for the sake of obedience to God, rather than in pursuit of our own rights and grievances. As Clement of Rome advised in the first century, "Let each of you, brethren, in his own order give thanks to God with a good conscience, not transgressing the appointed rule of his service, in reverence" (Epistle to the Corinthians, xli).

The worst of all the corrupting ideologies, however, is individualism, which pits every person against every other. The Church is the Body of Christ, whose members are called and placed according to Christ's will and not their ambition. There is no individual Church, but only the corporate Church that God has called into being by his grace and will. Part of that grace has been the Anglican Tradition. Those who do not believe this to be true are free under our civil constitutions to form a church of their own, or to join a church that they do believe in. But until Anglicans begin acting as if their first loyalty is to Someone and something greater than themselves, we are on a course that will lead to as many "Anglican churches" as there are individual "Anglicans."

Author unknown - from the UPDATE archives!

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