



# Newsletter

Diocese of the West

May, 2015

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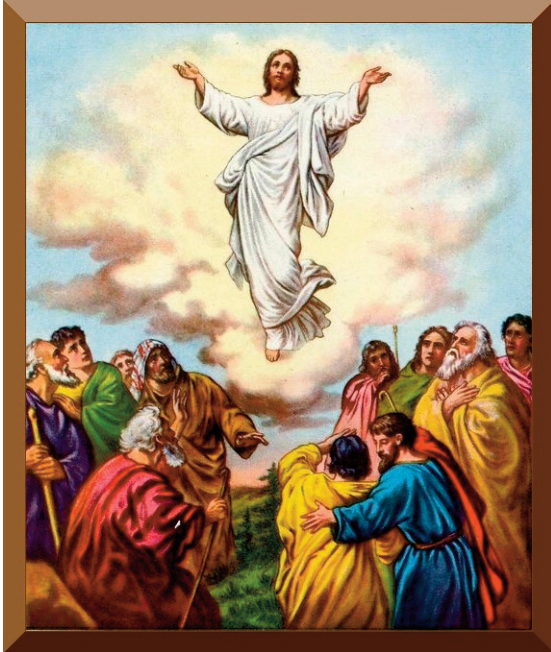
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## Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I pray this finds you all in good health. On Thursday, May 14th, we celebrate Jesus Christ's glorious ascension into Heaven, where He sits on the right hand side of God the Father.



“I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.”

John 16:28

## The Bishop's Corner

In a parish where I was rector, there was a woman who came to church faithfully on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday...and that was it. She was the mirror opposite of those who notoriously attend only on Christmas and Easter to rejoice, but do not choose to watch in sorrow and penance. We regard the woman's behavior as rather morbid, to observe the Crucifixion without noting the Resurrection.

But our own style reveals much in common with her. We take seriously the forty days of Lent, and Easter is then a glorious celebration. But a funny thing happens at that point. There are forty days to Easter, just as to Lent, yet the Christian community mostly goes missing. The next Sunday is called “low Sunday,” and that generally describes the attendance. There are no special services, and indeed the priest may take a vacation or a few days off. It is then back to routine Sunday worship.

The Christians of the early centuries, for whom the Resurrection was a powerful central force in their lives, could not possibly contain their celebration to one day. Bright Week, the week after Easter Sunday, was a



## The Bishop's Corner (continued)

time when fasting was forbidden. For the fifty days until Pentecost, kneeling was abolished and shouts of “Christ is risen. Alleluia” permeated worship. In many places, kneeling was considered as inappropriate on Sundays in general, as each Sunday is a “little Easter.”

If there were no Resurrection, happiness in any aspect of life could only be fleeting. The old Danish hymn, “Vi gaar mod doden, hvorhen vi gaar” (we go towards death wherever we go), says it well. We are doomed! A visit to most of our churches would confirm that life indeed must be grim. Dour, unenthusiastic worshippers kneel in penitence, mumbling their prayers and often their hymns, sung slowly and weakly. No one looks happy. Our phrase “don’t preach to me,” does not mean “stop telling me the wonderful good news of the risen Christ,” but rather, “stop your negative and legalistic rant.”

Where ever did our joy go? Knowing that Christ is indeed risen, that we who do not deserve it are loved with the perfect love of God who truly cares about us and saves us, who can remain sad? Read the famous Easter sermon of St. John Chrysostom and ask yourself how Christians could have somehow missed the point? Life is, of course, full of problems and at times and in places, intense suffering and grief. The 21 Egyptian new martyrs beheaded in Libya are but one dramatic example of what can happen to Christians. Their death is a deeply ugly episode of human depravity and sin. But they died because their

joy in the Lord and their faith in his love for them was greater than their fear of death or their temptation to apostasy. Easter’s joy doesn’t abolish fear, sadness, grief, suffering and oppression, but rather transcends it.

And this may come as a surprise, but Resurrection is not a religious notion or dogma. Instead, it is an historical reality in the same category as any other event in history, albeit with a more cheerful outcome than most historical events. Its efficacy lies in the fact that it happened. Therefore, may your Easter celebration last until Pentecost and indeed be renewed every Sunday.

Christ is risen!

### Choices

Our Diocese is entering a period when change will happen, as many are already aware. With my retirement looming next year, a crossroads will be reached. In the Anglican Church in North America process, new bishops are nominated by election at a diocesan synod, and then elected by the College of Bishops of the ACNA. Many bishops have expressed that they are opposed to small dioceses, and that they intend to use their power to elect the bishop as the way to eliminate those dioceses. Of the 28 dioceses, only 3 are smaller than we are. Therefore, there is likely to be strong opposition to choosing a new bishop for the Diocese of the West next year, with the intent of dissolving the Diocese. We need to prepare now so that we can decide on a course of action, given the probable mindset of the bishops. This has been discussed at the last two Clericus sessions,



## The Bishop's Corner (continued)

as well as with the Reformed Episcopal bishops meeting last month in Houston. I will attempt to outline below the possible choices that have been suggested to date, so that we may reflect on all of them as openly as possible. This is not an exhaustive list (no one has yet suggested joining the Ordinariat or ROCOR, for example), so additional possibilities may emerge. These are presented without editorial comment on my part, so that you may consider them on their merit.

1. Dissolve the Diocese next year, as suggested by some of the ACNA bishops, with the parishes deciding which other diocese they wish to be affiliated with.

2. Identify a vision for the Diocese which expresses a model different from that of most ACNA bishops (they replicate what they know, which is the model of the Episcopal Church). Perhaps more like the dioceses of the early centuries, or the African dioceses of the Byzantine era, explaining carefully how it works, and be prepared to stoutly advocate for it and defend it.

3. Leave the ACNA, (and therefore the REC as well, since it exists only within ACNA), and become an independent diocese, or join one of the Continuing Churches. There are many choices for the latter: APA, ACA, APCK, ACC, DHC, etc., or one of the other independent Anglican or pseudo-Anglican movements.

4. Join the Missionary Diocese of All Saints as a convocation. MDAS is a nation-wide diocese in ACNA under a form of organization known

as an “affiliation” rather than a “geographical” diocese, with an orientation to Forward in Faith. FIF is a primarily Anglo-Catholic group, although the Diocese is not just for Anglo-Catholics. As a convocation, the community of the present DOW could continue as a separate entity within the Diocese, perhaps even with its own bishop, who would be a suffragan (assistant) of the diocesan bishop.

5. Join the REC Diocese of MidAmerica as a convocation. DMA is a large diocese within REC. If it included us, and assuming it will absorb the Diocese of Western Canada and Alaska (a process already happening), it would cover all of the U.S. and Canada except for the East, with a boundary line from Indiana to Mississippi. The convocation within DMA would function the same as described above in #4.

Another REC alternative would be to join the REC Diocese of the Central States as a convocation, since this is a smaller diocese where there would be a mutual advantage to our joining their numbers.

6. Approach one of the parallel dioceses within ACNA (Western Anglicans, CANA Diocese of the West) that cover essentially the same territory, with the idea of being a convocation within the diocese.

7. Become a missionary diocese within the REC. The constitution of the REC allows for this, although the ACNA constitution does not, so it would be a test case like option #2. Missionary dioceses are centrally controlled by

## The Bishop's Corner (continued)

the REC rather than being semi-autonomous, with a bishop chosen by the REC, and have a simpler, more authoritarian structure than other dioceses.

All of the above choices (except #1) require the discipline of something approaching near consensus to work. Therefore, it is incumbent on us to converse together and pray to achieve agreement on the best way forward. We will continue the discussion at Synod. In the meantime, if you have a viewpoint to express, please feel free to share it with me, or even better, share it in these pages of the newsletter. Christ is risen!

Your bishop,  
+Win

## Parish News

### Installation of Christopher Parrish St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills

On Sunday, April 12, the Reverend Christopher Parrish was installed as the rector of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills by Bishop Winfield Mott.

Both Father Parrish and Bridgitte, his wife of twenty six years, were born and raised in South Africa. Father Parrish graduated from Rhodes University with a B.A. in English and Biblical Studies and a Higher Diploma in Education (Secondary School). He served as a teacher in the South African Army for two years, where he was deployed to Damaraland, Namibia. During that period, he began studies for a Bachelor of

## Parish News (continued)

Theology degree through the University of South Africa. At the end of this two year period, Father Parrish taught English in high schools in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. After graduating with a Bachelor of Theology, he was selected for seminary training at St. Paul's College, Grahamstown. He was ordained deacon in 1984 and to the priesthood in 1985. Father Parrish has served in various churches with people of different languages, races and cultures.

Father Parrish met his beautiful wife Bridgitte in 1988. She has been a great helpmeet and partner in the ministry, her special ministries over the years being to children and women, and in prayer and intercession.

In 1996, God called them to Los Angeles, California. They sold everything they had in South Africa and came to Los Angeles with their two young sons, as they believed this great step to be God's will for them. Father Parrish could not find work in the Episcopal Church and eventually went to work for the Victory Outreach, a ministry to drug addicts, alcoholics and gang members. They learned a little about street evangelism and evangelism through contemporary drama. When that position ended, he worked various other jobs outside of the church.

From 2004 to 2006, Father Parrish was licensed as a supply priest in the Episcopal Diocese of LA, but found the diocese to be too liberal. He then found The Reformed Episcopal Church online and visited St. Luke's Church in Santa Ana, CA in 2006. Father Parrish was received

## Parish News (continued)

as a presbyter in the Diocese of Mid America in June of 2007. In 2008 he served as a part-time assisting priest in St James Anglican Church in Newport Beach, California. Then in 2009, he was appointed as rector of All Saints Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, where he and Bridgitte served for six years prior to coming to St. Luke's.

May God Bless Father Parrish and his family as they serve the people of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills.



Bridgitte and Reverend Christopher Parrish with the Right Reverend Winfield Mott

### Holy Week at Christ the King Arroyo Grande, CA

Holy Week at Christ the King in Arroyo Grande, California, under the guidance and leadership of our Deacon-in-charge Chris Linebarger and our supply priest Rev. Steve Sterry, was a very rich, diverse and renewing time. We began, of course, with a traditional

Palm Sunday mass complete with a procession of palms.

Maundy Thursday communion service ended with the stripping of the altar. During the stripping of the altar as the sanctuary lights were slowly lowered, a beautiful choral rendition of the Lamentations of Jeremiah was played. We then exited the chapel in complete silence.

Our Good Friday service was held in the afternoon on the lawn of one of our parishioners. We were seated in front of a veiled rustic wooden cross. Deacon Chris offered meditations on the Seven Words of Jesus on the Cross. These meditations were interspersed with periods of silence, prayers, and hymns. And once again we left the service in silence.

The Easter Even Vigil with renewal of baptismal vows began at 10:30 p.m. in the home of our Senior Warden. The service began in darkness with the light of Christ being brought forward. Following the service an Easter feast was enjoyed by all.



Submitted by Nancy Walters



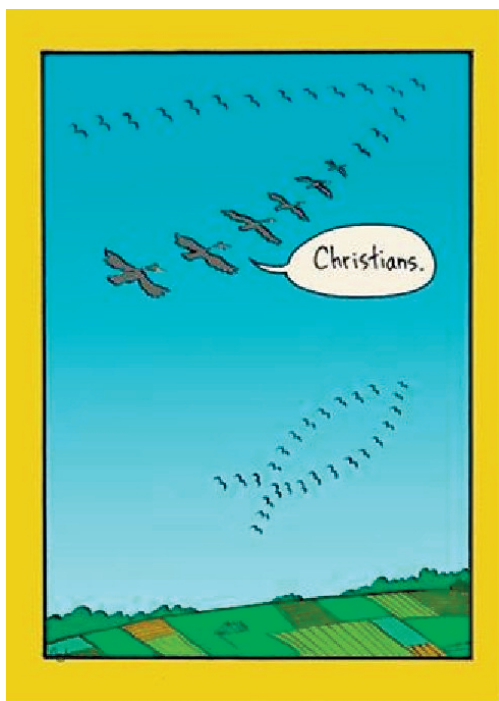
## Synod

This year's Synod is soon approaching - June 30th thru July 2nd. Letters have gone out to most of you. Barbara and Father Longero have just received a complete list of names for the diocese, so those of you who have not received one will be receiving one shortly. Be sure to respond in a timely manner, as the date will be here before we know it.

## Memorial Day

On May 25th we honor all those who have so bravely given their lives to insure our freedom. And to all those who have served in our military, a very heartfelt thank you.

### Hint of Humor



Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored.  
~Daniel Webster



"Wireless communication is nothing new. I've been praying for 75 years!"



