

# The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

Waterloo, Ontario  
www.stedmund.ca

## UPDATE

The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada / The Traditional Anglican Communion

April 14, 2009 - **Saints Tiburtius, Valerian and Maximus**

### May Schedule

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|--------|----------|--|
| May 1  | Friday   | St. Philip and St. James, the Apostles |
| May 3  | Sunday   | The Third Sunday after Easter          |
| May 10 | Sunday   | The Fourth Sunday after Easter         |
| May 17 | Sunday   | The Fifth Sunday after Easter          |
| May 21 | Thursday | Ascension Day                          |
| May 24 | Sunday   | The Sunday after Ascension Day         |
| May 31 | Sunday   | The Day of Pentecost / Whitsunday      |

### Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, Matins is sung at 10:00 a.m. (The Litany on the first Sunday of the month), and the Holy Eucharist is celebrated (sung) at 10:30 a.m.
- (3) On weekdays - Major Holy Days - the Holy Eucharist is usually celebrated at 7:00 p.m., 10:00 a.m. on Saturday.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

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- 1) Political correctness attempts to argue that apples and oranges are the same, and anyone who disagrees is called a bigot - **THE DIFFERENT DIMENSION OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS** - this page.
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## THE DIFFERENT DIMENSION OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

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### 33 YEARS

Political Correctness exists to support the Culture of Death. It exists to run interference for the Culture of Death and introduce red herrings wherever necessary whenever the discussion starts to approach the truth.

I first heard the terms "diversity" and "multiculturalism" as a theology student at Boston College, "a Catholic University in the Jesuit Tradition."

These shibboleths were thrown around, and I remember thinking, "Who is not diverse? Who is not multicultural? This is a university, and a Catholic university, at that, and all people are welcome. Catholic means universal." Then I caught on. It was not about race, ethnicity, national origin or creed, but about ideology - radical feminism in its intense advocacy of abortion, and the "gay agenda." Quite naturally both by implication and in rhetoric, the Catholic Church was portrayed as an "oppressor."

It was deliberately blurred that the Catholic Church accepts all of God's children with love, because of what they are: God's children. Matters of ethnicity and race are part of what they are. Abortion and homosexual activity are acts: things which people do, acts which they have a free will to do or not do.

Homosexual acts and abortion are acts which the Church condemns as contrary to God's law and harmful to those who commit them and to society in general.

Political correctness deliberately attempts to blur this distinction and conflate opposition to certain immoral activities with unjust discrimination against people of various races and cultures.

Political correctness attempts to argue that apples and oranges are the same, and anyone who

disagrees is called a bigot.

I have contended for years in my own writing that this movement has all the potential for tyranny and destruction of life as Nazism and Communism if allowed to continue on its current track. In terms of sheer numbers, 45 million lives have already been lost through abortion. Some people are offended by these sorts of comparisons, but simply look at the body count.

In this culture of radical leftism, owing to its Marxist roots, there is a certain status and cachet in being a victim. Campus radicals, easily among the most privileged people on earth, long to consider themselves oppressed.

### SO HOW DOES THIS PLAY OUT?

As I write, the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate is completing its confirmation hearings of Judge Samuel Alito for his appointment as Associate Justice to the United States Supreme Court. Pro-abortion senators on the committee were falling over themselves in their attempts to portray Judge Alito, a Catholic, as "racist, sexist, anti-gay" as the chant goes. It was a shameful charade of attempted character assassination, especially from Senator Edward Kennedy, a Catholic, provoking emotional responses from more rational members of the committee. Senator Dianne Feinstein asked questions regarding how far outside the "mainstream" Judge Alito was, by which she meant how pro-life was he.

Surely Senator Feinstein knows this is propaganda because if abortion were truly "mainstream" its proponents would have nothing to fear from leaving it to the people to decide in a vote rather than the courts.

It was a shameful display of the self-righteousness -

and desperation - of inverted morality.

It is now 33 years since Roe v. Wade came down in the United States establishing the artificial right to kill an innocent child in the womb. Times have changed in that period. Every serious Catholic knows the life of the child overrides any misguided shame placed on the woman over the circumstances of her pregnancy and that love, understanding, and compassion are needed. Meanwhile, abortion proponents still portray the Church as harsh and judgmental.

Medical science has all but eliminated any need for a so-called "therapeutic abortion." The psychological sciences have shown that abortion traumatizes a woman for life, doing far more harm than bringing the child to term.

In an inexplicable line of questioning, Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont (a Catholic) asked Judge Alito if there was any provision under the U.S. Constitution in which an innocent person could be executed. Judge Alito, looking surprised at such an odd question, said, "That's the ultimate tragedy that could possibly occur in our criminal justice system. We should do everything we can to prevent that from ever occurring."

As Leahy persisted, Judge Alito finally said, "The Constitution is designed to prevent that."

Watching this, the irony struck me that the answer to Senator Leahy's question was yes, there is a provision in the Constitution under which an innocent person could be put to death, and that provision is that such a person may be put to death only so long as he or she is still in the womb.

Nevertheless, Judge Alito's reply was correct in real terms: the Constitution is designed to prevent that. It is the ultimate tragedy that could possibly occur in our criminal justice system. We should do everything we can to prevent that from ever

occurring.

### **ROE V. WADE IS AN ABERRATION**

One wonders if Senator Leahy realizes that in his attempt to show up Judge Alito as callous, he was chopping down the tree in which he and his other pro-abortion colleagues were perched. One also must wonder if Leahy, Kennedy and company also caught their irony of grilling Judge Alito on whether he would be an advocate for the "little guy" while they campaign for the continued legalized killing of the "littlest guy" of all: the little boy or girl in the womb.

The Father of abortion is also the Father of Lies. As Jesus said, "He was a liar and a murderer from the beginning." The lies are legion: that "Political Correctness" is at all concerned with justice and tolerance, that it is "caring and compassionate" to help a woman kill her child in the womb, that being an "oppressed minority," i.e., a woman, trumps laws against murder, and that anyone has a "right" to commit murder, i.e. Abortion.

Opposition to abortion will never go away. Abortion will never be accepted in a civilization worthy of the name. If abortion were a morally neutral act like a tonsillectomy, the discussion would not still be going on, much less going on at this fever pitch 33 years later.

The notion of 33 years has great meaning for Catholics as the number of years of Christ's earthly sojourn. We must pray and redouble our efforts to see that the continued crucifixion of today's Holy Innocents will soon cease, and that "Kindness and truth shall meet, Justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, And justice shall look down from heaven." (Psalm 85: 10-11)

By **John Mallon**, Contributing Editor, *Inside the Vatican* - February, 2006

## **ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS**

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**Michaelmas Sermon: Croyden, South London**

READ *II Kings* 6,14 - 17

**"Fear not, they that be with us are more than they that be with them".**

If you tried to explain the plot of a book you were reading to your dog, you'd have a hard time. You'd have an even harder time explaining the book to your goldfish. How can God explain Himself to us?

Humans can not understand God. One of the first things we say about Him is that He is incomprehensible. Well, God has three methods of self explanation.

The first is the best, incarnation, enfleshment. God became man. In the human nature of Jesus, in His words and deeds, in His life and death, we see the Divine nature on our terms, at our level. This is why we are to hear the Bible read in public, why we are to read it ourselves. The Bible makes Jesus known to us.

God's second method is by pictures or images. God describes Himself variously as, say, Rock, water, Shepherd. We know that God is not a great big Rock up in the sky, but we know what He's getting at when He says He is rock-like. This is why we are to hear the Bible read in public, why we are to read it ourselves. The Bible makes God's pictures known to us.

The Bible, above all Jesus Himself, are always for all men everywhere, without exception.

God's third method is a rare one. Very occasionally He gives visions to rare individuals of His choosing. Beware visions! They are mostly false. They may come from mental illness. They may come from the devil. St Paul warns us, "Satan fashioneth himself as an angel of light" (*II Corinthians* 11,14). All visions are to be tested against the Bible, against Jesus. If there is any contradiction, then the vision is not from God.

In my text we read about a genuine vision. The prophet Elisha asked God to show the frightened young man the reality of the situation. God flashed into the imagination of the young man a vision of angels. The vision may be given to a rare individual, but if it is genuine then the rest of us can learn from it too. You and I can benefit from Elisha's servant. "Fear not, they that be with us are more than they that be with them".

Among us there is a tradition of supposing that angels can not make head or tale of humans. God has made us like pigs in that we love eating. God has made us like dogs in that we love sleeping. Charles Wesley's communion hymn sings, "Angels in fixed amazement around our altars hover". The Palm Sunday hymn sings, "The winged squadrons of the sky look down with sad and wondering eye". The tradition goes back all the way to St Peter who wrote, "which things angels desire to look into" (*Peter* 1,12).

Whether angels understand us or not, humans can not understand angels. Some have speculated that angels are energies, as light, heat, and movement are forms are energy. This is why in visions and in art angels are depicted as associated with wings and wheels and brilliant white and shining light and

gold and bronze. Elisha's servant saw horses and chariots (movement) made of fiery flames. Some have speculated that angels are pure intelligence, without bodies. This is why in visions and in art they are pictured as young men with supernatural powers; our imaginations simply can not picture a mind without a body. And so we say inadequately, angels are spirit. The Bible is full of angels, but we suspect that God is having to dumb down for our benefit, just as He dumbs down when He says He Himself is a Rock.

Elisha's servant learns about reality. Yes, the king of Syria surrounds the city with a great army of chariots. Yes, death stares the Jews in the face. But God is about to intervene with a miracle. God whose power is pictured as an army of angelic charioteers, can not be defeated by mortals.

That's a hard lesson to grasp as we survey an uncertain future. What lies ahead? The decline and fall of Christian civilization? The rise of Marxist China? The rise of militant Islam? Persecution of one sort or another? "Fear not, they that be with us are more than they that be with them".

Fifty years ago I heard a sermon preached from this very text, to a congregation in South Africa suffering apartheid under an ever more powerful government with ever more oppressive laws. But then it seemed that God intervened with a modern day miracle. Apartheid ended, and ended peacefully. God was not defeated by mortals. It was delightful to think of chariots and horses of fire over against the government's tanks of mere metal. Or think of Stalin's armies ranged against the little old grandmothers praying in secret, believing firmly in the armies of the sky, the angelic hosts of God.

Fear not. That's the meaning of the vision for us also. However, a warning. For reasons known only to Himself, God often chooses not to intervene with miracles. St Peter was in prison, facing death. Christians prayed, as Elisha had prayed long before, and an angel appeared. "A light shined in the cell". Peter was miraculously released. (*Acts* 12,1- 11) "Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent His angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod and the expectations of the people". But at the very end of Peter's life there was to be no repeat miracle. Jesus had warned Peter, "When thou wast young thou girdest thyself and walked whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hand and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This Jesus spake signifying by what manner of death Peter should glorify God". (*John* 21,18 - 19)

In His agony in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus Himself referred to the armies of the sky, "Thinkest thou that I can not beseech my Father and He shall send even now more than twelve legions of angels?" (*Matthew 26,33*). For reasons known to Himself Jesus chose not a miraculous escape but the cross. Luke tells us that in the garden while He was at Prayer, "There appeared unto Jesus an angel from heaven strengthening Him" (*Luke 22,43*). Strength but not escape.

The future then may be full of miraculous escapes for you and me, for the whole Christian church. They that be with us are more than they that be with them. But equally well, we may instead be asked to

take up one kind of cross or another. God may choose not to intervene with miracle. Peter was crucified. Jesus was crucified. And in that suffering of Jesus God gives His very best explanation of Himself. What is God like? Look at a crucifix.

Whether we escape or not, the lesson remains the same: Fear not. Even in Gethsemane, the lesson is the same: "There appeared unto Jesus an angel from heaven strengthening Him."

So now to Jesus, with His Father and His Spirit, from men and from the angel host, be thanks and praise for evermore.

**+Robert Mercer CR**

## FROM HERE AND THERE

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### 1) **About Mothers:**

Any mother could perform the jobs of several air-traffic controllers with ease. **Lisa Alther**

My mother had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it. **Mark Twain**

My mother's menu consisted of two choices: Take it or leave it. **Buddy Hackett**

The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for thirty years she served the family nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found. **Calvin Trillin**

What kind of little girl was your Mom? I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.

2) **His Holiness** has been taking a lot of heat from the liberal press recently over his comments about condoms and that they won't stop the spread of AIDS. Good to see a couple of rational letters to the editors of the *National Post* (on April 1) who believe the Pope is right:

(a) If condoms are the answer to stopping the spread of AIDS, in Africa and anywhere else, then why are there still people being diagnosed with the disease every day? Here in our affluent society, a condom is as close as the nearest drugstore, yet the disease is still overwhelmingly spread through sexual contact.

The Pope is right: Condoms do not stop the spread of AIDS. Abstinence and fidelity within

marriage are the only foolproof ways of halting its spread. Pope Benedict's latest courageous teaching of truth and justice has been deconstructed for the purpose of launching yet another hypo-critical, anti-Catholic attack. Years from now, when the condom mentality proves to be useless, will the same attackers acknowledge Pope Benedict's foresight and wisdom? **Terry McDermott**

(b) Some well-informed people - including Edward C. Green, director of the AIDS research project at Harvard, and Martin Ssempe, a prominent AIDS activist in Uganda - agree with the Pope. Yet everyone seems to want to take a shot at Benedict and his views on condoms. In return, the Pontiff does not take a shot back but instead prays for those people and for everyone's sense of justice. **Rod Nonato**

### 3) **What happens to the money I give to the church when I die?**

Over the past few weeks, some have raised the question as to what happens to any money that they may leave to their local parish church when they die.

As you are all aware, the churches have, over many years, built up what we call 'endowment funds' from such bequests. It is these endowment funds which permit us to make plans for the growth of the church. At St. Peter and St. Paul, it would not have been possible for us to consider the purchase of the house next door, and the sale of the building so that we can buy the facility that is needed for the future, without the generous gifts from our faithful donors.

The constitution of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada is very clear. Any moneys that you may choose to leave to the parish in which you live and worship is the sole property of that parish. It cannot be appropriated by any other church body, or used for any other purpose than that for which it is given.

There are some significant tax advantages to making proper plans for the distribution of your estate; advantages which can be very beneficial to your heirs and beneficiaries. It is very important that you take note of these advantages, and yes, we have a purpose in this, because these tax rules can also benefit your church. If you would like to have a little more information, please ask your wardens. They can point you in the right direction to get some independent and professional help in this matter.

**Fr. David Marriott SSC**, Assistant Curate, The Parish of St. Peter & St. Paul, Vancouver, B.C., in *The Traditional Anglican*, No. 93

#### 4) **Cardinal Giuseppe Siri, Archbishop of Genoa:**

The worship of God remains the first duty of man and the Church.

The Divine Liturgy is stimulus, source, and cause of the supernatural spirit and life in the soul of the faithful.

The worship of God is the prime act to which men are bound and the prime ordinary instrument for the salvation of souls.

With the Divine Liturgy, especially if understood and followed, everything is sanctified and elevated.

The Liturgy [is] the visible expression of the Faith.

The custody of orthodoxy of the Faith involves the careful custody of orthodoxy in the Liturgy.

(He often reaffirmed the need for catechetical preparation.) A conception of the Liturgy that

would disregard its revealed content would risk to become merely a 'spectacle'.

A fruitful participation in worship manifests itself in a commitment that includes every aspect of Christian life.

#### 5) **From the Parish Newsletter of Father Ralph Beaumont, Lake District, England**

Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$7,000 per month.

My grandpa started walking five miles a day when he was 60. Now he's 97 years old and we don't know where he is.

I like long walks especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

I have to walk early in the morning before my brain figures out what I am doing.

I joined a health club last year, spent about 400 bucks. Apparently you have to go there.

Every time I hear the dirty word 'exercise', I wash my mouth out with chocolate.

I do have flabby thighs, but fortunately my stomach covers them.

The advantage of exercising every day is so when you die, they'll say, 'Well, she looks good doesn't she.'

If you are going to try cross-country skiing, start with a small country.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Every time I start thinking too much about how I look, I just find a Happy Hour and by the time I leave, I look just fine.

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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*At the start of the Advent Retreat, Fr Robert Farmer [St Stephen's House, University of Oxford] preached at the Sung Mass of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. The theme of the Retreat was the French School of spirituality and so his homily, which is reproduced here, draws on the Fathers of the French School and their devotion to the our Blessed Lady.*

You have to feel sorry for poor old Bishop Knox of Manchester. A convinced evangelical and a

renowned persecutor of Anglo-Catholic priests and parishes at the beginning of the last century, he also found time to father four sons. One became an atheist, another an agnostic. Wilfred Knox was a faithful Anglo-Catholic priest till the end of his life and a member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd. Ronald Knox, of course, after an Anglo-Catholic period became a Roman Catholic priest, a well-known writer, and controversialist. But the bishop had no understanding or sympathy for any of these alternative trajectories, the Catholic variants least of all. His grand-daughter, the novelist Penelope Fitzgerald, records him saying to Mrs Knox:

Between ourselves Winnie, I can't understand what it is that the dear boys see in the Blessed Virgin Mary.

What is it that we 'see' in the Blessed Virgin Mary and what brings us together this evening to celebrate her Immaculate Conception? Well, Catholic Christians have seen a good deal in the Mother of Jesus and have proclaimed the fruits of that sustained, contemplative gaze in dogma, liturgy, devotion, music, art and poetry over many centuries. As we prepare to enter into our Advent Retreat and to meet some of the central figures in the French School of spirituality, this evening let's glance at what some of them saw in the Blessed Virgin Mary. Perhaps we can make their 'seeing' our own.

Jean-Jacques Olier was the founder of the Community of St Sulpice, a fraternity of priests dedicated to the formation of candidates for holy orders which continues to staff seminaries around the world to this day. It isn't surprising then that Olier spoke frequently of Our Lady as the Queen of priests, Mother of priests, Advocate and model of the clergy and so on. Baroque sentimentality gone mad you might think, but Olier's devotional language was rooted in his perception that Mary's mission was to bring Jesus to a waiting world. That Marian mission is ours too and just as Mary fulfilled her mission through her motherhood so priests, in their preaching, sacramental ministry and pastoral care, also make Christ present. So powerful was this perception that Olier chose the feast of Mary's Presentation, the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, as the day on which all the members of his seminary-community were to consecrate themselves to the service of Christ and his Church in their respective vocations, just as Mary's life had been consecrated in the Temple. As he wrote:

She surrendered herself wholly to God with a marvellous confidence . . . and teaches us to live in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, given up to the will and the care of God the Father.

Another important figure (more or less contemporary with Monsieur Olier) was St John Eudes, who was also the founder of several communities, both of men and women. Some of these communities were responsible for priestly formation, but others were primarily engaged with front-line mission activity throughout France and especially in Normandy. Once again, St John Eudes' baroque vocabulary is rich, extravagant and can be misinterpreted. You will remember the novel in which a caricature of this House begins with a contretemps about images of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Well, this is a devotion rooted in the writings of St John Eudes, but it is not a devotion that easily commends itself to many of us today and it can have an irritant effect upon Protestant hackles. Suffice to say that a 'return to the sources' is almost always a good thing and I think that actually reading Eudes will calm jangled evangelical sensibilities, at least to some extent. What does Eudes say about Mary whose 'heart' is, for him, the symbol of her human depth, capacity for love and God-given vocation? He tells us that Jesus is 'the spirit of her spirit, the soul of her soul and the heart of her heart.' For St John Eudes, it is the Son who chooses, graces and empowers his Mother.

But lying behind Olier, Eudes and all the other figures who are part of the French School is the remarkable Cardinal Berulle - the theological engine who drives the movement. Berulle offers us some very clear words on this feast of the Immaculate Conception, words that remind us of that one source in which all that Mary is and does is rooted:

[Jesus] happily preserved her from all offence. He adorns her with all grace. He makes her worthy of carrying him and receiving him into the world. He comes into her as his tabernacle. He rests for nine months in her as on a throne. He comes to us through her.

These are words which might have allayed Bishop Knox's fears a little, though I doubt it. Yet here we have the clearest statement that Our Lady's Immaculate Conception is all the work of Jesus and is part of the preparation for his Incarnation - not a grace bestowed randomly upon an individual, but rather an essential part of the drama of salvation. Elsewhere Berulle writes:

Conceived without sin, sanctified from the first moment of her existence she was born with little attention or clamour. . . . If earth did not think of her, the most tender gaze of God upon the earth was reserved for this humble, unknown, unrecognized virgin.

We see something characteristic of Berulle here, and of his circle: a concern to balance grand theological statements about the Mother of God with insistent reminders that she is also the biblical, historical 'lowly virgin of Nazareth'. It is this same woman in whom Berulle finds the model of Christian silence, prayer and contemplation. He says:

And the Virgin is silent. This is her state, her way, her life. Her life is one of silent adoration of the Eternal Word. Seeing this same Word, the substantial Word of the Father, before her eyes, on her breast and in her arms, being unable to speak and reduced to silence by the state of his infancy, she enters a new silence where she is transformed by the example of the Incarnate Word who is her Son, her God, and her only Love. And thus her life goes from silence to silence, from the silence of adoration to the silence of transformation.

I find this account of Mary's interior life profoundly convincing and profoundly moving. The immaculate and ever-virgin Mary responds in adoration to the

Word within. She is the true model of all Christian contemplative experience, in which our adoration is called forth in response to God's Word spoken deep within us. Like her, we are to become sounding-boards and echo-chambers in which the Word can be spoken, as Dom Cyprian Smith once wrote. This is both our challenge and our invitation this evening as we prepare for two days of retreat together - days which will go from silence to silence; days in which we offer our adoration in the hope that God may speak his Word in us as he spoke it in Our Lady; days in which his transforming love may touch us once more. So we pray in Monsieur Olier's words:

O Jesus, living in Mary,  
come and live in us your servants,  
in the spirit of your holiness,  
in the fullness of your power,  
in the perfection of your ways,  
in the communication of your mysteries;  
and conquer all the powers that work against us  
to the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

## ***IF DOCTORS WHO WON'T KILL ARE 'WICKED,' THE WORLD IS SICK***

Talk about Orwellian. A woman described as a "leading expert in ethics" has declared that doctors who refuse to kill their patients are "genuinely wicked." I'm not making this up. Mary Warnock, a British baroness told the Northern Ireland Forum for Ethics in Medicine and Healthcare this past Monday, that doctors who refuse to break their Hippocratic oath are evil. It seems that virtually every day, I read another story that proves the world - and what is accepted as good and true - is being turned on its head.

Referring to terminally ill patients who make a written request to be killed when they reach a certain point in their illness, Warnock said: "There are doctors, we know, who don't pay any attention (to those written wishes to be killed). "But that seems to me a genuinely wicked thing to do - to disregard what somebody had quite explicitly said, that he wants to die . . . "

This is the same old bird (she's 84) who argued that people who have dementia or Alzheimer's disease have a "duty to die" because they are a burden to society and their families. "If you're demented, you're wasting people's lives - your family's lives - and you're wasting the resources of the National Health Service," she said a few months ago.

There was a time when such statements would be described as wicked and the orator as well. But in Warnock's twisted world of "ethics," doctors who kill are righteous and doctors who refuse to kill are villainous. Black is white, white is black and wrong is right. Murder is merciful and compassionate care, cruel. Somewhere out there, George Orwell is saying, "I told you so."

In her January 5 speech, Warnock dismisses the idea that murdering the elderly and "demented" will not lead to a slippery slope of killing infants, depressed teens and others. But that is precisely what is happening in Holland, where euthanasia has been practised since 1980 and has been fully legal since 2002. Currently, infants born with defects are often killed by their doctor, with or without the parents' permission, not that permission makes it any more acceptable. That's not just a slippery slope, it's Mount Everest in a blizzard.

The language surrounding euthanasia is necessarily softened by its proponents, calling the active killing of another human being, mercy killing, dying with dignity and choice. But what actually has been shown to happen in places that embrace legalized euthanasia is the antithesis of choice.

In a government study in the Netherlands, called



Medical Decisions about the End of Life, it was found that in 1990 alone 1,031 patients were actively killed by their doctor without their request and of those people, 14 per cent were fully competent, 72 percent had never expressed that they wanted their lives ended and in eight per cent of the cases, doctors performed "involuntary euthanasia" even though they believed other options were available. Similar subsequent studies found similar outcomes.

So, this form of "choice" actually leads to thousands of people never being able to make a choice - ever again.

Even some staunch proponents of euthanasia say Holland is an extreme example. Much better to look to Oregon, where physician assisted suicide (PAS) has been legal since 1997. But in the reports published annually by the state, it's evident that choice is compromised in Oregon too. In 1998, 12 per cent of PAS patients in Oregon said they chose this irreversible course of action because they didn't want to burden their family. That rose to 26 percent in 1999, 42 percent in 2005 and 45 per cent in 2007, the last year figures are available. If that were a company's bottom line, champagne corks would be popping!

In other words, for the infirm and disabled, the right to die quickly becomes the duty to die. Wanting to live despite being frail or ill increasingly is viewed as selfish in places where euthanasia is the law. That's not empowerment, it's coercion, guilt for living, pressure to die.

According to Belfast's daily paper, *The News Letter*, after Warnock spoke in the debate - which was ironically held in a local church, one of the members of the audience, Avril Robb, a lawyer and a member of the Medical Legal Society, said she had cared for her parents through their terminal illnesses and stated: "I do know that the last 5 months were very precious." That is what many who spend time caring for a dying parent, child or spouse say about a loved one's last days and months. Their vulnerability causes all emotional walls to tumble down and petty problems to vanish.

A nurse friend of mine who works in palliative care but had also spent years helping to bring babies into the world says: "I'm convinced that dying can be a more blessed a time than birth." That may sound counterintuitive, but compared to saying that refusing to kill is wicked, it's much easier to believe.

**Licia Corbella** - *Calgary Herald*, January 10, 2009

## THE SECULARIZATION OF THE CHURCH

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Secularization is the process by which a society becomes more and more distant from its Christian roots. Though the formal sociological theory is more complicated than that, the essence of secularization is the fact that the culture no longer depends upon Christian symbols, morals, principles, or practices. While most of the world is resolutely unsecular, much of Europe is pervasively secular - and this includes Great Britain.

Nevertheless, the secularization of society is one thing, but the secularization of the church is another. Yet, at least one major leader of the Church of England now assumes what can only be described as a secular vision of the church.

Writing in a new publication of the Institute for Public Policy Research in London, Dr. John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, calls for the Church of England to represent people of all faiths, and those of no faith at all.

Writing in *Faith in the Nation: Religion, Identity, and the Public Realm in Britain Today*, the Archbishop argues that the Church of England deserves its place as the established church of Great Britain

because it now serves as a "public utility" serving the common good.

As *The Times* [London] reported the story:

The Church of England should be open for use by people of any religion or none, like a hospital, says Dr John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York.

There is a strong case for regarding the Church as a public body that does not exist simply to serve believers, he argues. Whether or not most people attend regularly is irrelevant.

This is a strange and pathetic vision of the church. No longer the assembly of believers, the church is now defined merely as a public utility. What does this public utility do? It exists, he argues, in order to provide service such as education, funerals, and a context for important national events - such as, he suggests, the funeral of Princess Diana.

In his chapter in the book, Archbishop Sentamu argues that the Church of England serves as a public utility that offers services "at the point of need for populations who will sooner or later require their

services." Quoting researcher Grace Davie, a specialist on religion in Britain, Archbishop Sentamu explains that "the fact that these populations see no need to attend these churches does not mean that they are not appreciated."

This has to be one of the strangest and most unbiblical concepts of the church ever to reach print. The church is now to be more or less on-call for a population that sees no need to attend these churches but nonetheless is assumed to appreciate the fact that they exist. Confused?

Well, the Archbishop goes on to cite Grace Davie again in proposing the idea of "vicarious religion." As she explains, "vicarious religion" is "the notion of religion performed by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number who (implicitly at least) not only understand, but quite clearly approve of what the minority is doing."

Finally, the Archbishop argues that the church provides "faithful capital" for the society at large, building community and relationships and social cohesiveness. Of course, as he acknowledges, all this is supposed to come without much (if any) emphasis on actual Christian beliefs or teachings. As a matter of fact, he assumes that most people will never attend church anyway. Evidently, the Archbishop no longer sees that as much of a problem.

This is the end result of liberal theology - a thoroughly secularized church. This Archbishop celebrates multiculturalism and religious diversity. No urgent concept of evangelism is to be found in his essay, for he appears to believe that no such effort is needed.

Archbishop Sentamu effectively erases the boundary between belief and unbelief, suggesting that the church belongs to believers and unbelievers alike. The saving message of the Gospel - the message of salvation from sin through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ - is replaced with a social function. The Body of Christ is transformed into a public utility.

In Matthew 16, Jesus states that his church is built on the confession that he is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." But in the church of liberal theology, any belief (or no belief at all) will eventually do. Furthermore, no one actually needs to come. Nothing of eternal significance is hanging in the balance anyway. A clear proclamation of the Gospel and the bold preaching of the Word of God may be missing, but the architecture is grand and the music is glorious.

Of course, Archbishop Sentamu is attempting to argue for the continued existence of the Church of England as an established state church. His argument represents what happens when the interests of the state are all that remain. But Christians in America - which thankfully has no state church - are not immune from the same temptation to reduce the meaning and mission of the church to social capital and public utility.

This is ultimately where liberal theology leads, and where the church meets its end. The gates of hell will easily prevail over anything reduced to the status of a "public utility."

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