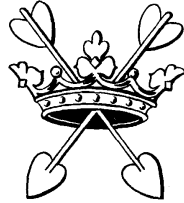


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

Waterloo, Ontario
www.stedmund.ca



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

UPDATE

January 8, 2008 - St. Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis (Phrygia) - died 175

February Schedule

February 2	Saturday	The Presentation of Christ in the Temple / The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Candlemas
February 3	Sunday	Quinquagesima
February 6	Wednesday	Ash Wednesday
February 10	Sunday	The First Sunday in Lent
February 17	Sunday	The Second Sunday in Lent
February 24	Sunday	The Third Sunday in Lent
February 26	Tuesday	St. Matthias the Apostle

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

- 1) **Pope gets radical and woos the Anglicans** - this page.
- 2) For **Robert's Ramblings - Food, Glorious Food** - page 3.
- 3) **Claims every Catholic should be able to answer** - the twelfth of twelve parts - page 4.
- 4) **Our Beloved Dead** - the third of seven parts - page 6.
- 5) Too much Oprah? - **Who's Influencing You?** - page 7.
- 6) The Catechism on - **Original Sin** - page 8.
- 7) Sometimes it feels lonely - **Not getting religion** - page 8.
- 8) The first of four parts on - **Blessed Mary - Ever Virgin** - page 10.

Pope gets radical and woos the Anglicans

Two and a half years after the name "Josephum" came booming down from the balcony of St Peter's, making liberal Catholics weep with rage, Pope Benedict XVI is revealing his programme of reform. And it is breathtakingly ambitious.

The 80-year-old Pontiff is planning a purification of the Roman liturgy in which decades of trendy innovations will be swept away. This recovery of the sacred is intended to draw Catholics closer to the Orthodox and ultimately to heal the 1,000 year Great Schism. But it is also designed to attract vast numbers of conservative Anglicans, who will be offered the protection of the Holy Father if they convert en masse.

The liberal cardinals don't like the sound of it at all. Ever since the shock of Benedict's election, they have been waiting for him to show his hand. Now that he has, the resistance has begun in earnest - and the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, is in the thick of it. "Pope Benedict is isolated," I was told when I visited Rome last week. "So many people, even in the Vatican, oppose him, and he feels the strain immensely." Yet he is ploughing ahead. He reminds me of another conservative revolutionary,

Margaret Thatcher, who waited a couple of years before taking on the Cabinet "wets" sabotaging her reforms.

Benedict's pontificate moved into a new phase on July 7, with the publication of his apostolic letter *Summorum Pontificum*. With a stroke of his pen, the Pope restored the traditional Latin Mass - in effect banned for 40 years - to parity with the modern liturgy. Shortly afterwards, he replaced Archbishop Piero Marini, the papal Master of Ceremonies who turned many of John Paul II's Masses into politically correct carnivals.

Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor was most displeased. Last week, he hit back with a "commentary" on *Summorum Pontificum*.

According to Murphy-O'Connor, the ruling leaves the power of local bishops untouched. In fact, it removes the bishops' power to block the ancient liturgy. In other words, the cardinal - who tried to stop Benedict issuing the ruling - is misrepresenting its contents.

Alas, he is not alone: dozens of bishops in Britain, Europe and America have tried the same trick. Murphy-O'Connor's "commentary" was modelled on equally dire "guidelines" written by Bishop Arthur Roche of Leeds with the apparent purpose of discouraging the faithful from exercising their new rights.

A few years ago the ploy might have worked. But news travels fast in the traditionalist blogosphere, and these tactics have been brought to the attention of papal advisers. This month, Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith, a senior Vatican official close to Benedict, declared that "bishops and even cardinals" who misrepresented *Summorum Pontificum* were "in rebellion against the Pope". Ranjith is tipped to become the next Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, in charge of regulating worldwide liturgy. That makes sense: if Benedict is moving into a higher gear, then he needs street fighters in high office. He may also have to reform an entire department, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, which spends most of its time promoting the sort of ecumenical waffle that Benedict abhors.

This is a sensitive moment. Last month, the bishops of the Traditional Anglican Communion, a network of 400,000 breakaway Anglo-Catholics based mainly in America and the Commonwealth, wrote to Rome asking for "full, corporate,

sacramental union". Their letter was drafted with the help of the Vatican. Benedict is overseeing the negotiations. Unlike John Paul II, he admires the Anglo-Catholic tradition. He is thinking of making special pastoral arrangements for Anglican converts walking away from the car wreck of the Anglican Communion.

This would mean that they could worship together, free from bullying by local bishops who dislike the newcomers' conservatism and would rather "dialogue" with Anglicans than receive them into the Church.

The liberation of the Latin liturgy, the rapprochement with Eastern Orthodoxy, the absorption of former Anglicans - all these ambitions reflect Benedict's conviction that the Catholic Church must rediscover the liturgical treasure of Christian history to perform its most important task: worshipping God.

This conviction is shared by growing numbers of young Catholics, but not by the church politicians who have dominated the hierarchies of Europe for too long. By failing to welcome the latest papal initiatives - or even to display any interest in them, beyond the narrow question of how their power is affected - the bishops of England and Wales have confirmed Benedict's low opinion of them. Now he should replace them. If the Catholic reformation is to start anywhere, it might as well be here.

By **Damian Thompson** in *The Telegraph* - November 16, 2007

Robert's Ramblings

Food, Glorious Food

"God giveth us richly all things to enjoy"
(1 Timothy 6,17)

I had long wanted to see a *medlar*, a fruit about which we read in medieval and Tudor times. I understood it to be out of favour, found only in the oldest of gardens. I understood that it was best enjoyed as rabbits and pheasants are enjoyed, when "high", that's to say, when beginning to rot. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* says of it: "Tree with fruit like small brown apple, eaten when decayed. From Old French *medler* from Latin from Greek *mespile*".

In last month's column I told you about my holiday in France. At breakfast, one morning our somewhat diffident Dutch hostess produced jam, "I'm not sure you'll like this." I didn't recognize it. "A touch of ginger?", I asked. "No, lemon to give it some taste. It's medlar". "Medlar!", I shouted in excitement. "I want to see the bush". She had almost a hedge of them. When she and her husband had acquired the property they found the plants there, and decided to leave them alone. So out we went into the drizzle to inspect this ancient delicacy. The fruits were indeed tiny, smaller than a walnut, not the least bit striking, looking as though they were made of wood. When I bit into one it proved hard and tasteless.

The jam hadn't been all that flavourful either, even though our hostess had waited for the frosts of winter before picking the fruits. Nor did it have a distinctive colour. She had found a recipe for this jam on the internet. (So the internet does have some use?) It reminded me of rose hip jam I had once bought in Ottawa, imported from Bulgaria, perhaps full of vitamin C but not all that tasty. I was tempted to try the hip jam because I had thoroughly enjoyed the berry jams exported by the same Bulgarian company.

Next morning in France our Dutch hostess produced a different jam to accompany the croissants and stickbread. Again she sounded diffident, "Quince, you may not know it". "Indeed I do," I replied, "it's a common fruit in Southern Africa." She said her French neighbours crystalized it to eat as candy at Christmas. That sounds delicious.

I said that the plant was hardy, able to cope with droughts, and that it therefore made good hedges with pretty pale pink flowers. If quinces were stewed and stewed and stewed with brown sugar, and then bottled in sweet desert wine, they made a delectable dish if served with yellow pouring cream, preferably from a Jersey cow; that on less festive occasions they made a palatable jelly to eat with roast meat or with toast.

Small boys will try almost anything they can pick from trees, fruits not worth the bother of eating, such as lemons, loquats, and pomegranates, and fruits not yet ripe for eating, such as green apples and pears. Once at a circus I was so attracted by the fragrance of a quince, yellow and pear shaped, that I bought it to eat while watching the show. Had I not been enchanted by Tickey and Sixpence the clowns, I'd have thrown the quince away long

before I eventually did. It really was hard and indigestible, even for the iron stomach of a determined boy.

Quince bushes had other uses. Schoolmasters made *kweperlats* from them, sticks with which to beat bottoms of bad boys, And boys made *kweperlats* from the light flexible sticks with which to hurl balls of dried clay or mud at one another. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* says that the word quince derives from the Old French through the Latin, *Cydonium* a place on the island of Crete.

Another popular South African fruit is the prickly pear, originally imported from Mexico, now gone berserk in the bush. The fearsome thorns on the plant and on the fruits are hazardous, but even worse are the almost invisible hairs on the "pears". They stick and stick in your hand, difficult to remove because hard to see. They certainly hurt. By all means enjoy the pears, preferably chilled and sliced, but only after somebody else has picked them.

Yet another popular fruit is the Cape gooseberry, now increasingly enjoyed in the UK as the golden berry, as distinct from the goosegog or English gooseberry. Whereas the British plant is thorny and hardy, fruiting for year after year, the South African plant dies after its first and only crop. The African berry is covered by a "shell" which looks like a miniature Chinese lantern.

When the Assyrians conquered territory they chopped down fruit trees and covered agricultural land with salt. The vanquished were to be vanquished. Jews were forbidden to copy the practice: "Thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof; for thou mayest eat them; for the tree of the field is the life of man" (*Deuteronomy* 20,19). God had said, "I have given you every herb and every tree yielding fruit" (*Genesis* 1,29).

Food is indeed delectable. And sometimes when we say grace, we actually mean it, "Thanks be to God".

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

Claims every Catholic should be able to answer - 12 of 12

Freedom of speech is a great thing. Unfortunately, it comes at an unavoidable price: When citizens are free to say what they want, they'll sometimes use that freedom to say some pretty silly things. And that's the case with the 12 claims we're about to cover. Some of them are made over and over, others are rare (though worth addressing). Either way, while the proponents of these errors are free to promote them, we as Catholics have a duty to respond. These errors are widespread, and it's our responsibility to correct them. So, at long last, I present to you 12 claims EVERY Catholic should be able to answer.

12. "People's memories of their past lives prove that reincarnation is true . . . and that the Christian view of Heaven and Hell is not."

As society becomes increasingly fascinated with the paranormal, we can expect to see claims of "past life memories" increase. Indeed, there are now organizations who will help take you through your previous lives using hypnosis.

While this may be convincing to some, it certainly isn't to anyone familiar with the mechanics of hypnosis. Almost since the beginning, researchers have noted that patients in deep hypnosis frequently weave elaborate stories and memories . . . which later turn out to be utterly untrue. Reputable therapists are well aware of this phenomenon, and weigh carefully what the patient says under hypnosis.

Sadly, though, this isn't the case with those interested in finding "proof" for reincarnation. Perhaps the greatest example of this carelessness is the famous Bridey Murphy case. If you're not familiar with it, here's a quick outline: In 1952, a Colorado housewife named Virginia Tighe was put under hypnosis. She began speaking in an Irish brogue and claimed to once have been a woman named Bridey Murphy who had lived in Cork, Ireland.

Her story was turned into a bestselling book, "The Search For Bridey Murphy," and received much popular attention. Journalists combed Ireland, looking for any person or detail that might confirm the truth of this past-life regression. While nothing ever turned up, the case of Bridey Murphy continues to be used to buttress claims of reincarnation.

That's a shame, since Virginia Tighe was exposed as a fraud decades ago. Consider: Virginia's childhood friends recalled her active imagination, and ability to concoct complex stories (often centered around the imitation brogue she had perfected). Not only that, but she had a great fondness for Ireland, due in part to a friendship with an Irish woman whose maiden name was - you guessed it - Bridie.

What's more, Virginia filled her hypnosis narratives with numerous elements from her own life (without revealing the parallels to the hypnotist). For example, Bridey described an "uncle Plazz," which eager researchers took to be a corruption of the Gaelic, "uncle Blaise." Their enthusiasm ran out though when it was discovered that Virginia had a childhood friend she called Uncle Plazz.

When a hypnotized Virginia began dancing an Irish jig, researchers were astounded. How, after all, would a Colorado housewife have learned the jig? The mystery was solved, when it was revealed that Virginia learned the dance as a child.

As the Bridey Murphy case shows, the claims of past-life regression are always more impressive than the reality. To this day, not a single verifiable example exists of a person being regressed to a former life. Certainly, many tales have been told under the control of a hypnotist, but nevertheless, evidence for reincarnation (like that for the Tooth Fairy) continues to elude us.

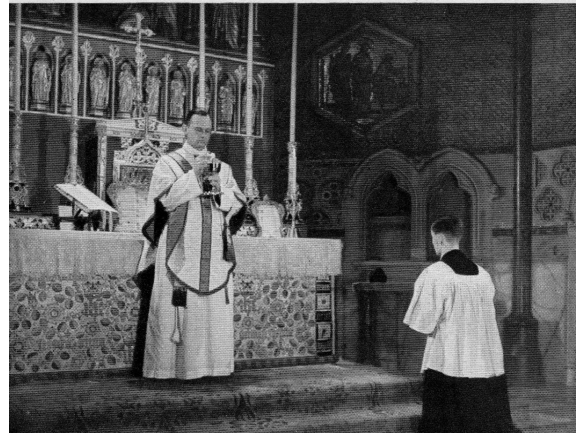
By **Deal W. Hudson**

From here and there

1) The Universal Church is today, it seems to me, more definitely set against the World than at any time since Pagan Rome. I do not mean that our times are particularly corrupt; all times are corrupt. In spite of certain local appearances, Christianity is not and cannot be within measurable time, 'official'. The World is trying the experiment of attempting to form a civilized but non-Christian mentality. The experiment will fail; but we must be very patient in awaiting its collapse; meanwhile redeeming the time: so that the Faith may be preserved alive through the dark ages before us; to renew and rebuild civilization, and save the World from suicide. **T. S. Eliot** - *Thoughts After Lambeth* (1931)

2) "Affirmative action" - odious white policy of paternalism. **Shelby Steele**

3) No one owns a fetus; no mother owns her child. Pro-choice has sadly evolved into anti-responsibility and justifiable infanticide. **Jack Chambers**



+Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world.

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed. (Thrice)

4) The Real Presence

The doctrine of the Real Presence asserts that in the Holy Eucharist, Jesus is literally and wholly present - body and blood, soul and divinity - under the appearances of bread and wine. Evangelicals and Fundamentalists frequently attack this doctrine as "unbiblical," but the Bible is forthright in declaring it (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16-17, 11:23-29; and, most forcefully, John 6:32-71).

The early Church Fathers interpreted these passages literally. In summarizing the early Fathers' teachings on Christ's Real Presence, renowned Protestant historian of the early Church J. N. D. Kelly, writes: "Eucharistic teaching, it should be understood at the outset, was in general unquestioningly realist, i.e., the consecrated bread and wine were taken to be, and were treated and designated as, the Savior's body and blood" (*Early Christian Doctrines*, 440).

From the Church's early days, the Fathers referred to Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Kelly writes: "Ignatius roundly declares that . . . [t]he bread is the flesh of Jesus, the cup his blood. Clearly he intends this realism to be taken strictly, for he makes it the basis of his argument against the Docetists' denial of the reality of Christ's body. . . . Irenaeus teaches that the bread and wine are really the Lord's body and blood. His witness is, indeed, all the more impressive because he produces it quite incidentally while refuting the Gnostic and Docetic rejection of the Lord's real humanity" (ibid., 197-98).

"Hippolytus speaks of 'the body and the blood' through which the Church is saved, and Tertullian regularly describes the bread as 'the Lord's body.' The converted pagan, he remarks, 'feeds on the richness of the Lord's body, that is, on the Eucharist.' The realism of his theology comes to light in the argument, based on the intimate relation of body and soul, that just as in baptism the body is washed with water so that the soul may be cleansed, so in the Eucharist 'the flesh feeds upon Christ's body and blood so that the soul may be filled with God.' Clearly his assumption is that the Savior's body and blood are as real as the baptismal water. Cyprian's attitude is similar. Lapsed Christians who claim communion without doing penance, he declares, 'do violence to his body and blood, a sin more heinous against the Lord with their hands and mouths than when they denied him.' Later he expatiates on the terrifying consequences of profaning the sacrament, and the stories he tells confirm that he took the Real Presence literally" (ibid., 211-12).

5) The two cows theory of political science:

PURE SOCIALISM You have two cows. The government takes them and puts them in a barn with everyone else's cows. You have to take care of all the cows. The government gives you a glass of milk.

FASCISM You have two cows. The government takes both, hires you to take care of them, and sells you the milk.

PURE COMMUNISM You share two cows with your neighbors. You and your neighbors bicker about who has the most "ability" and who has the most "need". Meanwhile, no one works, no one gets any milk, and the cows drop dead of starvation.

RUSSIAN COMMUNISM You have two cows. You have to take care of them, but the government takes all the milk. You steal back as much milk as you can and sell it on the black market.

CAMBODIAN COMMUNISM You have two cows. The government takes both and shoots you.

DICTATORSHIP You have two cows. The government takes both and drafts you.

PURE DEMOCRACY You have two cows. Your neighbors decide who gets the milk.

BUREAUCRACY You have two cows. At first the government regulates what you can feed them and when you can milk them. Then it pays you not to milk them.

CAPITALISM You don't have any cows. The bank will not lend you money to buy cows, because you don't have any cows to put up as collateral.

6) On the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

Our Beloved Dead - 3 of 7

5) **The Church teaches that there are various degrees of perfection amongst the Blessed Dead.**

St. Paul comparing the Saints with the stars of heaven, declares that "one star differeth from another star in glory" (I Cor. 15:41).

6) **The Church teaches that the Souls of the Blessed Dead grow and advance in perfection.**

St. Paul teaches that "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). The "day of Jesus Christ" is the day of His final coming. It is clear that the work of the Spirit, guiding, teaching, cleansing, will go on until our Lord's coming, when the dead will be raised, and "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23), will be reunited to their bodies, and they will have the perfect consummation, in both body and soul of that bliss of Heaven which previous to their resurrection they could enjoy but partially.

7) **The Church teaches that in the next world**

the Blessed Dead are cleansed.

It cannot be said of any man that he is perfect at the moment of death; and death is not a sacrament of cleansing and perfecting. Unless there is an opportunity after death of being cleansed and prepared, there is no hope of heaven, for it is revealed in Scripture that nothing can enter that Holy City that defileth (Rev. 21:27).

Even where all sin has been forgiven, the effects remain in the way of moral stain, weakness and infirmity. As Bishop Forbes says, (XXXIX Articles, p. 346), "We have in us passive bad habits, unheavenly tastes, which the soul contracts through sin, and which remain after the guilt of sin is remitted, and these must be removed before our entrance into heaven, into which nothing that is impure or imperfect may enter."

Because of these things every soul needs cleansing, and the Church has ever taught the existence of an Intermediate State into which only the souls who pass out of this world in a condition of grace, can enter, and in which they are purged. This state is called Purgatory from the fact that it is a place of purging.

Purgatory might be called the ante-room of Heaven. No soul that leaves this world in a state of unrepented mortal sin can enter Purgatory any more than it can enter Heaven itself. This blessed place of cleansing and preparation is reserved only for those who are saved. It is not a place of second probation, for there is no such thing. Dwelling there in the hand of God in their abode of peace where no torment can touch them, nor care corrode, are the souls who, although weak and sinful, yet chose God in this world, and tried earnestly, and to the end, to love and serve Him. They can never again fall from Him. The grace they have received they can now never lose.

"In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead."

From *Our Beloved Dead*, a booklet by **The Rev. S.C. Hughson, O.H.C.** - published for *The Guild of All Souls* in 1950

Who's Influencing You?

Churches are dropping worship services left and

right. Growing up as a preacher's kid in the South of the fifties and sixties, I was in church every time the door was open - Sunday morning Sunday School and worship services, Sunday night prayer service, Wednesday night Bible study, Thursday night choir practice. And that doesn't include youth activities, Church camp, or Vacation Bible School. I knew the inside of our church better than I knew my own home. But today, most churches and religious organizations have dropped the Sunday night service, many have eliminated the Wednesday night Bible study. And Sunday School? That was replaced years ago with "Children's Church," so families would only have to spend an hour at church on Sundays.

As a result, the number of hours we spend listening to preaching or teaching have dropped dramatically in the last fifty years. And typically, even the most hardcore, serious people of faith are exposed to religious teaching less than an hour per week. On the other hand, media exposure has dramatically increased. The statistics are sobering. The average American family watches TV and surfs the Internet an average of 4-5 hours per day, and children less than two years old are now watching TV daily. By the time the average teenager is 18, they've been exposed to as many as 100,000 beer commercials alone, not even counting the violence, coarse language, and sexual innuendo that typifies prime time TV.

The flood continues. The Census Bureau reports that teenagers will spend the equivalent of 5½ months next year listening to digital music players, working on computers, and watching TV. And as entertainment moves to cell phones, it will only get worse. Which makes me wonder, in our media-driven culture, who's influencing you? Most people would agree that influence comes from the things we spend time doing. So how much time are you really spending each day in reflection, prayer, or spiritual growth? We wonder why people of faith aren't making more of an impact in the culture, when the answer is clearly, how we're spending our time.

Somewhere along the line, the church substituted "events" for "discipleship." Flip through the pages of a typical Christian magazine or watching Christian TV, and you'll find plenty of major "events." I love events myself. But events don't make disciples. Relationship does. I love the media, but we'll never develop relationships or deepen our faith without putting limits on our media use. Re-think how much you use the media,

and then prioritize the media in the context of your personal life. Computers, the Internet, e-mail, and even TV and radio are great tools, and non-profit and religious organizations of all kinds are using those tools to impact the culture. But media is ultimately about influence, and clearly, what we choose to expose ourselves to, will have the dominant power in our lives.

Because the truth is - at the end of your days, as you stand in front of your Creator, how important will it be that you never missed an episode of Oprah?

Original Sin

Q: In trying to explain the idea of Original Sin to a non-Catholic friend, I began to wonder: Where did this idea come from? Is it based on the Bible? Is it a specifically Catholic belief?

A: The Catholic Church's teaching about Original Sin is a way of saying that all people are in need of salvation - even before they have committed any personal sin. No one living presently enjoys the complete harmony with God that we were originally intended to have.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "The doctrine of original sin is, so to speak, the 'reverse side' of the Good News that Jesus is the Savior of all [people], that all need salvation, and that salvation is offered to all through Christ. The Church, which has the mind of Christ, knows very well that we cannot tamper with the revelation of original sin without undermining the mystery of Christ".

The term Original Sin describes what the New Testament calls the human family's universal need of redemption (Jesus' constant call to conversion, as well as John 1:29, Romans 5:12 - 19, Ephesians 2:3, 1 John 5:19 and 1 Peter 5:8, for example).

In the fifth century, St. Augustine of Hippo explained that the Church baptizes infants not because of sins they have committed but because they have already inherited a human condition stained by sin, polluted by the sin of Adam and Eve.

Without an idea of Original Sin, evil must result from a defect in God's creation or a conflict between two equally strong gods. The authors of the two creation accounts in the Book of Genesis

(1:1 - 3:24) vehemently reject the sin-as-defect explanation. Although the first account does not address the issue of sin, the second one clearly identifies it as coming from a misuse of human freedom.

If you agree, as all mainline Christians do, that all people are wounded by sin, then you are really accepting the basic concept of Original Sin, by whatever name.

Not getting religion

"Suppose you picked up your morning newspaper, and read that the local softball team, sponsored by Ken's Transmission Specialists, had won the World Series.

"'That doesn't seem right,' you might say to yourself. The boys from Ken's are as good as any nine men when it comes to pounding the Budweiser, but in terms of athletic ability . . . And didn't some team from Boston just win the Series? Puzzled, you read on. The story explains that the World Series took place in the parking lot behind Sal's Discount Suds.

"At this point you realize that the story is complete - well, 'nonsense' is the polite term. You realize that the editor of the sports page is incompetent, and you think seriously about canceling your subscription. Right? "Then you probably won't be impressed with the editors in St. Louis who gave the OK to a story that begins: 'A couple of firsts: Two women were ordained as Roman Catholic priests Sunday in St. Louis - and the ordination was in a synagogue.' "

Pseudonymous blogger Diogenes, writing on "Journalists Without [bleep] Detectors," on Monday at Catholic World News blog "Off the Record."

It has been thirty years since the meeting in St. Louis when the Affirmation was written. The above blurb, a comment on a recent example of sloppy news reporting in the same city, reminds us that the immediate cause of the Continuing Church movement was the crisis provoked by the "ordination" of women in the Episcopal Church and in the Anglican Church in Canada. As much as we want to applaud the point made by Diogenes the Blogger, the truth keeps us sober. In the case of Continuing Anglicanism, it was the valid and faithful expression of Anglicanism that was made

to appear like a local softball team claiming to have played the World Series behind a store in a parking lot. Our own church here in Easton, Maryland spent about eleven years in rented store front space, which earned us the mockery and disdain of the "proper" Episcopalians in town (the respectable folks from the local ecclesiastical "Gay Bar"); that is, until 2005 when we moved into a large former Roman Catholic church building on a prominent corner, conveniently two blocks from the ECUSAn cathedral. Appearances can be deceiving; in 1977 the official Canterbury Anglicans, with the backing of then Archbishop Donald Coggan - who tried to kill this Continuing baby before it was born - managed to maintain their respectability, not to mention the property, assets and name of the established churches. Frankly, they have, over these thirty years, kept just about everything, except the Faith. So, they should not mind that we have kept it.

In these thirty years the other side have gained notoriety in place of respectability. The Episcopal Church embarrasses itself every time it makes the news; and who can forget that the official Anglicans in Canada almost put themselves out of business by the sexual abuse of Indian children in schools? (No, I haven't forgotten all you Brits, Aussies and others. I was just pointing out a few tidbits.) It may be tempting for us to shift our focus to the issue of homosexuality, the "Blessing" of same sex unions, which sounds like a labor movement, but isn't. After all, when the headlines scream at us about the majority of Anglicans in the world who want to break communion with the ECUSAns, and C of Ers, many of us would like to be in that large, impressive company of "orthodox" Anglicans who stand on principle, those godly Africans and Global Southerners. Sometimes it feels lonely in this movement.

But, we must not forget that the immediate cause of our break with the Cantuarian elite was the issue of women's "ordination." We must consider the theological connection between sacraments. The majority of principled Anglicans cannot help but notice the heresy of Homosexuality (learn that word: it means the heresy of teaching and promoting this form of immorality as an acceptable way of life), since they don't like it. As I said in a *Touchstone* article published in 2004:

After all, what the homosexualists have been able to do is to base their arguments upon a foundation already laid for them. That foundation has included relaxation of the moral

laws about sexual behavior. It has also included the confusion of sex roles ever since women were first "ordained" in the Episcopal Church. The conservatives have accepted these things, but hope now to credibly and effectively oppose the homosexualist cause. This cannot be done.

The fact is, once the "ordination" of women was accepted, the movement to bless same sex unions was inevitable. The arguments for Homosexuality are not merely similar to the arguments for women's "ordination." Rather, they are the exact same arguments. The blessing of same sex unions, practiced now throughout the heretical but official Canterbury Communion, is performed as a church rite by sincerely lusting couples under the direction of clergypersons of both sexes and all genders, to be as close to the semblance of marriage as the Law of each state, province or nation makes possible. In short, it imitates the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, and does so on the newly understood basis that the sex of a person has no significance in a sacrament. If Shirley and Maggie can be "ordained" they can also be married, and so can Adam and Steve.

The "conservatives" among the Anglicans have failed to understand the gravity of logic. It works the same way as this illustration. If I stand at the top of a thirty foot hill with a big round rubber ball, and decide to roll the ball only ten feet down the hill and no farther, like it or not, the ball will roll the entire thirty feet to the bottom before it stops after rolling even farther still. It does not matter that I intended only to roll it ten feet. Once I let go, gravity will take the ball the whole way. This is how a premise works in relation to logic. Once you let go of the ball, that is, once you state or merely accept a premise, the gravity of logic will take over. Perhaps you only meant to let women be priests, but not to let the premise take its own logical course to the final end. However, the premise itself is subject to the gravity of logic, and must keep rolling until you are "blessing" Adam and Steve in the imitation sacrament of Unholy Unmatrimony. Those who want to argue that this was not inevitable have two problems facing them: First, we predicted this would happen, and second, it has.

So, with all due respect to our conservative and principled Anglican friends who want to keep their priestesses, and make new ones, we cannot surrender the doctrine that the sacrament of Holy Orders is, by God's revealed will, reserved to men.

Otherwise, we only slow the process down instead of preventing it. We don't need to be ECUSA part II, waiting to happen again.

By **Father Robert Hart**

Blessed Mary: Ever Virgin - I

Most Protestants claim that Mary bore children other than Jesus. To support their claim, these Protestants refer to the biblical passages which mention the "brethren of the Lord." As explained in the Catholic Answers tract *Brethren of the Lord*, neither the Gospel accounts nor the early Christians attest to the notion that Mary bore other children besides Jesus. The faithful knew, through the witness of Scripture and Tradition, that Jesus was Mary's only child and that she remained a lifelong virgin.

An important historical document which supports the teaching of Mary's perpetual virginity is the *Protoevangelium of James*, which was written probably less than sixty years after the conclusion of Mary's earthly life (around A.D. 120), when memories of her life were still vivid in the minds of many.

According to the world-renowned patristics scholar, Johannes Quasten: "The principal aim of the whole writing [*Protoevangelium of James*] is to prove the perpetual and inviolate virginity of Mary before, in, and after the birth of Christ" (*Patrology*, 1:120-1).

To begin with, the *Protoevangelium* records that when Mary's birth was prophesied, her mother, St. Anne, vowed that she would devote the child to the service of the Lord, as Samuel had been by his mother (1 Sam. 1:11). Mary would thus serve the Lord at the Temple, as women had for centuries (1 Sam. 2:22), and as Anna the prophetess did at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:36-37). A life of continual, devoted service to the Lord at the Temple meant that Mary would not be able to live the ordinary life of a child-rearing mother. Rather, she was vowed to a life of perpetual virginity.

However, due to considerations of ceremonial cleanliness, it was eventually necessary for Mary, a consecrated "virgin of the Lord," to have a guardian or protector who would respect her vow of virginity. Thus, according to the *Protoevangelium*, Joseph, an elderly widower who already had children, was chosen to be her spouse.

(This would also explain why Joseph was apparently dead by the time of Jesus' adult ministry, since he does not appear during it in the gospels, and since Mary is entrusted to John, rather than to her husband Joseph, at the crucifixion.)

According to the *Protoevangelium*, Joseph was required to regard Mary's vow of virginity with the utmost respect. The gravity of his responsibility as the guardian of a virgin was indicated by the fact that, when she was discovered to be with child, he had to answer to the Temple authorities, who thought him guilty of defiling a virgin of the Lord. Mary was also accused of having forsaken the Lord by breaking her vow. Keeping this in mind, it is an incredible insult to the Blessed Virgin to say that she broke her vow by bearing children other than her Lord and God, who was conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The perpetual virginity of Mary has always been reconciled with the biblical references to Christ's brethren through a proper understanding of the meaning of the term "brethren." The understanding that the brethren of the Lord were Jesus' stepbrothers (children of Joseph) rather than half-brothers (children of Mary) was the most common one until the time of Jerome (fourth century). It was Jerome who introduced the possibility that Christ's brethren were actually his cousins, since in Jewish idiom cousins were also referred to as "brethren." The Catholic Church allows the faithful to hold either view, since both are compatible with the reality of Mary's perpetual virginity.

Today most Protestants are unaware of these early beliefs regarding Mary's virginity and the proper interpretation of "the brethren of the Lord." And yet, the Protestant Reformers themselves - Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli - honored the perpetual virginity of Mary and recognized it as the teaching of the Bible, as have other, more modern Protestants.

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