



# The S. Stephen

The monthly news at S. Stephen's Church in Providence  
October/November, 2006

Vol. 6, No. 2

## Bookkeeping at S. Stephen's

As you may already know, Irene Gravel, S. Stephen's bookkeeper for ten years, retired on March 15, 2006. Thanks to some networking that Father Alexander did through the diocese S. Stephen's has had an efficient and cost effective book-keeping solution in place since April 1, 2006.

John McGlashan was hired to take care of the income side of the book-keeping. He works in the church office and uses the Church Windows accounting software. John counts and logs all of the contributions and other income and does such chores as send out the quarterly member statements and send out thank you notes for special and unusual gifts.

John was a machine designer/mechanical engineer until he retired in 2002. He is an active member of St. George's Episcopal Church in Central Falls, RI and has been so since the early 1960s'. While at St. George's he served on the Vestry and as Junior Warden. He also served as Parish Treasurer and Bookkeeper for twelve years. John and his wife have two daughters and one grandchild.

Finance Management Services, Inc. in Slatersville, RI, was hired to take care of the payroll and expense side of the bookkeeping. Priscilla McFarland is assigned to the S. Stephen's account. She works out of her office at Finance Management Services and uses Quickbooks accounting software. In addition to payroll and payables, Priscilla creates the monthly Treasurer's Report for S. Stephen's Treasurer, Brian Ehlers, for both income and expense and does the annual Parochial Report for the diocese.

Priscilla has been working at Finance Management Services, Inc. (FMSI) for six years. FMSI is a small accounting firm specializing in small businesses as well as families who need help with their budgets. Currently FMSI does the bookkeeping/accounting for eleven churches, ten of which are in the



## All Saints Harvest Supper

A committee has organized to plan the All Saints Harvest Supper on Saturday, November 4th, focusing this year on the harvest, thanks for the earth's bounty, and for our blessings. During part of the evening we will share our blessings and think of those less fortunate by collecting items to be distributed to the needy at the New Year's Day Dinner.

We need people to arrange for food and decorations and a team to handle intake and inventory of items for our New Year's Day guests.

Though the committee has already begun their work on this event, volunteers are still welcome. Please talk to Cory MacLean, our Parish Secretary, about your willingness to join in the fun.

Traditionally the All Saints Harvest Supper has been one of the best events for socializing and a good time at S. Stephen's Church. Watch for final details in the Kalendar.

---

Diocese of Rhode Island, and nine of which are assigned to Priscilla.

Priscilla has been married to Wesley McFarland for thirty-one years. They have four grown children, and live in Slatersville, a village in North Smithfield.

Another Episcopalian, Priscilla attends Calvary Church in Pascoag where she served as Junior Warden for three years and was the treasurer for eighteen years. She also chairs the Parochial Report Review Committee at the Diocese.

*Brian Ehlers, Treasurer*

## Stewardship Campaign Underway

You may have noticed an envelope in your mail box from S. Stephen's Church. You may have thought that it looked like a bill and placed it in the stack to be dealt with at the end of the month. Or, you might have realized that it is October, and that the envelope felt like it might have a pledge card in it. Maybe you started praying for guidance as to how you can best participate in our community, how you can best help to maintain and sustain our "Gate of Heaven."

Participation by all of the members of the parish is absolutely critical to the survival and even more so to the growth of S. Stephen's. In years past, a few wealthy parishioners supported the parish. Unfortunately, we no longer have that luxury. This year, in particular, there will be a significant short-fall in the budget unless each of us is able to increase our pledge. We have estimated this short-fall to be 15% of our pledge income from the last three years.

We ask three things of you. First, please open that envelope and start thinking (and praying) about your pledge as soon as it arrives. Second, please consider a 15% increase this year, if at all possible. Third, please do not delay in getting your pledge in. We would like to be done with this campaign before the end of October. (Chasing down outstanding pledges has been a great deal of work in the last few years!) Thank you!

*Tom and Cathy Bledsoe  
Stewardship co-chairs*

Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

*2 Corinthians 9:7*

*Father Alexander's letter to the parish***My dear people:**

The new season at S. Stephen's is off to a good start. It was especially gratifying after the summer to welcome back the Schola Cantorum for the Feast of the Dedication on 24 September. A week later, at the 1 October Evensong and Benediction for St Michael and All Angels, we were treated to a splendid sermon by the Rev'd F. Washington Jarvis, who recently retired as Headmaster of the Roxbury Latin School and is Priest Associate at our fellow Anglo-Catholic parish of All Saints, Ashmont, in Boston.

You may receive this issue of *The S. Stephen* after the annual Memorial Organ Recital has taken place on Sunday 15 October, with its Blessing and Rededication of the newly rebuilt organ console. At the time of writing, however, this is still a future event, to which I am looking forward with great anticipation.

Meanwhile, we have resumed our schedule of Sung Evensongs in the Lady Chapel on Sunday evenings at 5:30 pm. So far, this service has drawn a small but highly committed core of devotees. I highly recommend it as a wonderful way to round off the weekend.

After taking a year's "sabbatical", I have resumed the weekly Lectionary Bible Study – now meeting on Fridays at 9:30 am in the Library. I certainly find it helpful to discuss the coming Sunday's readings with parishioners before attempting to write my Sunday sermon. And it was encouraging that several different people approached me over the summer with the request to

start up this Bible Study again.

The month of November fast approaches, bringing a number of notable parish events and activities. The month's double emphasis – really two sides of the same coin – is celebration of the Communion of Saints and prayer for all the Faithful Departed.

Our celebrations of the Feast of All Saints begin at Mass in the Lady Chapel at 5:30 pm on Wednesday 1 November; and continue with Solemn High Mass with the Renewal of Baptismal Vows on Sunday 5 November.

We shall also celebrate more informally the evening of Saturday 4 November with an All Saints Harvest Supper in the Great Hall. We are planning to use this family event to begin collecting small items to be distributed to the needy at the New Year's Day Dinner on 1 January. We need help with the planning and co-ordination of this annual Fall event – Please contact Cory MacLean to find out more.

On Thursday 2 November, All Souls Day, we shall commemorate All Faithful Departed with a sung Requiem Mass at 5:30 pm. Forms are available at Sunday Mass for you to record the names of the departed whom you would like to be remembered.

Then, on Sunday 12 November, we shall keep Remembrance Sunday. The *Schola Cantorum* will sing Maurice Duruflé's *Requiem* at the 10 am Mass. Falling on the Sunday after Armistice Day (Veterans Day), Remembrance Sunday is widely observed in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth countries, and also in an increasing number of parishes in the United States. It is highly appropriate to set aside this Sunday during November, the month of prayer for the dead, to offer a Requiem Mass for those who have died in war.

At the 10 am Mass, you will have noticed that we are experimenting with a new format for the Entrance, with the choir entering during the opening Voluntary and the Altar Party entering the "short way" during the singing of the *Introit* and censing the High Altar during the opening hymn. This

procedure restores the *Introit* to its ancient and proper function of accompanying the entrance – the word *Introit* actually means "entrance" -- and also gives us a bit of extra time to complete the initial censing and get ourselves in place to begin Mass. However, this change is still very much in "trial use," and its advantages and disadvantages will be evaluated and weighed in due course.

Finally, don't forget to set your clocks back one hour the evening of Saturday 28 October!

This letter comes with all good wishes and prayers. I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

Fr. John D. Alexander

November 11  
**Martin of Tours**  
(d. 397)

*Martin was born of Pagan parents in Italy. Joining the army at the age of fifteen, he converted to Christianity at eighteen. Later after becoming a priest, he preached throughout France and eventually became the Bishop of Tours.*

Encountering a beggar while he was on horseback, Martin realized he had nothing to give but the clothes on his back. He unsheathed his sword and promptly cut his cloak in half and gave it to the beggar. That night, he had a vision of Christ wearing his very cloak.

On his deathbed, some of the priests at his bedside felt that they should turn his body over to give him some relief. Martin stopped them saying: "Brothers, allow me to keep my eyes on heaven rather than earth so that my spirit can set its course and in the right direction when it's time for me to leave on my journey to the Lord."

*The Wit and Wisdom of the Saints*  
Victoria Hébert and Judy Bauer

**The S. Stephen** is published nine times a year, September through June, by S. Stephen's Church in Providence, 114 George St., Providence, RI 02906, The Rev'd John D. Alexander, Rector  
Phone: 401-421-6702,  
Email: office@sstephens.necoxmail.com  
Fax: 401-421-6703  
Editor: Karen Vorbeck Williams, 434-6723  
vorkar@cox.net  
**Contributors this month:** Tom Bledsoe, Brian Ehlers, Ed Zeldin and the Rector  
**Deadline:** the fifth day of the month.  
**www.sstephens.org**

## A Confession... by Ed Zeldin

*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8*

A priest is bound by Church law never to reveal anything a penitent has told him during a confession. A layperson, however, is under no such stricture. I'd like to share some thoughts about a confession I recently made.

On a Friday afternoon in early summer I had planned to attend Evening Prayer and Mass starting at 5:30. During the mid-afternoon I became absorbed in something – playing the piano or reading – and before I knew it there was barely enough time to arrive for the beginning of the service, if I hurried. I closed up the house, got in the car, and began to drive the usual 11-12 minute route to Church, hoping that there wouldn't be too much traffic.

It had been raining on and off, the weather was gusty, and the pavement slick. I made good time until I came to one of the larger East Side intersections. A car was stopped in front of me at a red light, which seemed to go on forever. Just then I noticed two girls in their late teens dash out from the sidewalk to try to cross in front of us, just as our light was turning green. The car in front of me stayed where it was. I didn't want to arrive late, and became annoyed at the expected few seconds of further delay. I even started to have indignant, judgmental thoughts about the inconsiderateness of young people nowadays. What then suddenly happened weighed upon me thereafter all the way to Church, and left me barely able to participate actively in prayer. (I had indeed arrived exactly on time). All I could do was let the prayers spoken by others wash over me like a balm, as my conscience stung.

After the candles were extinguished, I felt that I needed to make a confession there and then. Fr. Alexander graciously made the time available to hear it. What I told him, in the half-light of the confessional, was that one of those girls slipped on the wet road, and took a very hard fall, right before my eyes. Her palms had slapped the pavement with full force, and she must have bruised her knee. She was clearly shaken, and obviously in some pain. Her companion ran back into the road to help her up. Together they stumbled over to the sidewalk, in

the cold rain. I did not help them. So intent was I on arriving at Church on time—and despite being aware of the irony of this—I sped on. As I looked in my rear view mirror I could see them still there and knew that I could yet turn around, offer to drive them home, or even to an ER, and I did not. At that moment it was as if I had never heard the parable of the Good Samaritan, had never undertaken a physician's calling, had never heard the Summary of the Law. Never was the reality of sin so starkly apparent to me.

I am not telling this because of any lingering guilt. I felt forgiven and was indeed truly forgiven. What I am left with, in addition to my gratitude to our parish priest and to "Holy Church" (as Julian of Norwich would say), is a much clearer understanding of what sin is. There was a time in my life when I denied that sin had any reality at all. Everything was rationalized, psychologized, explained (and sometimes ignored), and after all, no one is perfect, is he? Litanies of atonement meant little if anything to me. All this has changed, in the light that emanates from the Cross. I can see that the awareness of one's sinfulness is a great gift. It is ironic that Catholicism is often seen as a guilt-ridden religion, when in fact it offers the way to liberation from the deadly effects of sin.

I am also struck by the unexpected intensity of my emotion during the act of confession. I could have told this story to my wife in just as much or even more detail, but it would have remained at the level of a story, ruefully and self-deprecatingly told. It wouldn't have moved me in the telling. In the confessional I was kneeling before the Throne of God, and was deeply moved. The spirit of repentance sprang to life in a new way. Fr. Alexander's priestly understanding and absolution helped me assimilate this.

I like to think that this episode has had a lasting effect, has colored at least some of my actions since then, and made me better able to confront sin in my personal life. Whenever I drive through that intersection I'm reminded of it. Thanks be to God.

## Epiphany Soup Kitchen on the move!

You may have heard that the Epiphany Soup Kitchen will soon need to vacate its current home at Epiphany Church in South Providence. A fire inspection earlier this year revealed significant deficits in the current kitchen facility, and renovations of that space appear to be prohibitively expensive. (Since the inspection, the cook has not been allowed to raise the oven temperature above 350 degrees!) While the new home is not yet completely finalized, it will likely be in one of the downtown churches, with a move date in early January, 2007.

The soup kitchen is one of the few places to get a free hot meal on

Saturdays, and usually serves between 100 and 150 individuals each week. Twelve different organizations staff the soup kitchen, helping to prepare food, serve the food and then clean up. Most of these are area churches, though some corporations are on the rotation. S. Stephen's usually provides volunteers for six to eight Saturdays per year.

Also of note, Tom Bledsoe has joined the Board of the Epiphany Soup Kitchen. Fr. Alexander has been one of the seven board members for the last few years.

The remaining dates for S. Stephen's at Epiphany this year are October 21 and December 2nd. Volunteers interested in serving should contact Tom at 246-2194 or email him at Thomas\_Bledsoe@Brown.edu.

### Lectionary Bible Study

meets Friday's at 9:30 a.m. in the church library. The Lectionary texts for the coming Sunday are the object of a study led by Father Alexander.

**Everyone is welcome!**

## THE CHURCH OF THE BASILICAS AND THE CHURCH OF THE CATACOMBS

by Father Alexander

My first visit to Rome took place in the Spring of 1986, when I was living and working in London. Elizabeth and I were dating and not yet married. We joined with some friends on a week-long pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi organized by an Anglo-Catholic parish in Brighton on the south coast of England.

Since the focus of the trip was pilgrimage, our group of about twenty visited dozens of churches that week. The two Church of England priests accompanying us celebrated Mass for us each day in various locations—most often, as I recall, in the chapel of the pilgrim hostel where we were staying. After twenty years, however, two celebrations of the Mass remain etched in my memory.

The first took place on the Sunday morning of our stay in Rome. Several of us hopped on a city bus across town to Vatican City for Mass at St. Peter's. This liturgy took place not at the papal altar in the basilica's crossing, but further back, in the apse, against the stunning backdrop of Bernini's Altar of St. Peter's Chair and the Holy Spirit Window. The area where we were seated – between the crossing and the apse – was larger than the naves of many great churches, even though it accounted for only a small portion of the basilica's total space. The congregation comprised hundreds of pilgrims and tourists of all nationalities. A Cardinal presided, several others sat in choir, and a full complement of priests and servers assisted. The Mass was celebrated with great style and dignity – the modern Roman rite at its best, such as we never see in this country. As I recall, the spoken parts were read in Italian, while the Ordinary—the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*—was sung in Latin to the plainchant *Missa de Angelis*, with many members of the multilingual congregation heartily joining in. The liturgy was profoundly moving: a glorious vision of the Church Triumphant encompassing a vast throng of worshipers from all nations of the world.

The second Mass that I remember from that trip has stayed in my memory largely on account of its stark contrast to the first. One morning, our tour bus took us outside the ancient city walls to the Catacombs of St. Callixtus on the Appian Way. Our group descended into the vast network of subterranean tunnels. The walls of the seemingly endless narrow corridors were lined with horizontal burial niches: a vast underground cemetery. The place was a veritable treasure trove of ancient Christian art dating to the second, third, and fourth centuries. Various corners and rooms revealed tombs of early Popes and Martyrs, with remarkably preserved wall paintings and exquisitely carved sarcophagi, from which the bones had long since been removed



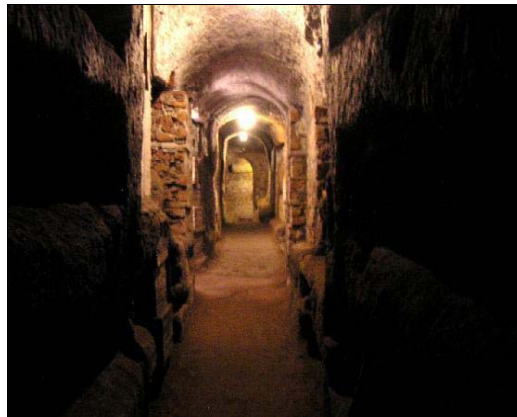
St. Peter's in Rome

to shrines in churches and cathedrals above ground. (I was so struck by the numerous ancient graffiti of the *chi-rho* symbol carved into the walls that, later that afternoon, on a visit to one of Rome's ecclesiastical vestment shops, I bought myself a surplice with a repeating *chi-rho* pattern embroidered into its lace bands.)

To conclude our visit, we entered a small underground chamber with four stone walls and a freestanding altar—an ancient chapel—where our priests said Mass for us. Scholars have debunked many romantic myths surrounding the catacombs. It is highly

unlikely, for example, that the early Christians ever used them as hiding places or sites of clandestine worship during periods of persecution. The locations of these Christian burial sites were no secret and probably well known to the Roman authorities. But was this chapel a place where second and third century Christians had celebrated the Eucharist on visits to the tombs of the martyrs on the anniversaries of their deaths? No one could be sure.

Still, in all its simplicity, that Mass was one of the most profoundly moving that I have ever experienced. Above ground, we had been visiting the magnificent basilicas of Christian Rome—St. Peter's, St. Paul's outside the Walls, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major. In all their splendor and beauty, those imposing edifices represented the triumph of Christian civilization in the years following the conversion of Constantine. The architectural form of the basilica itself was that of a grand Roman public building taken over by the Church and adapted for Christian worship. Yet here, in this small chapel in an ancient underground cemetery, we were making contact with an earlier period of Church history, when Christianity was still outlawed and martyrdom remained a very real possibility for all who embraced the faith. That morning, we had journeyed back in time



A catacomb outside Rome.

from the Church of the Basilicas to the Church of the Catacombs.

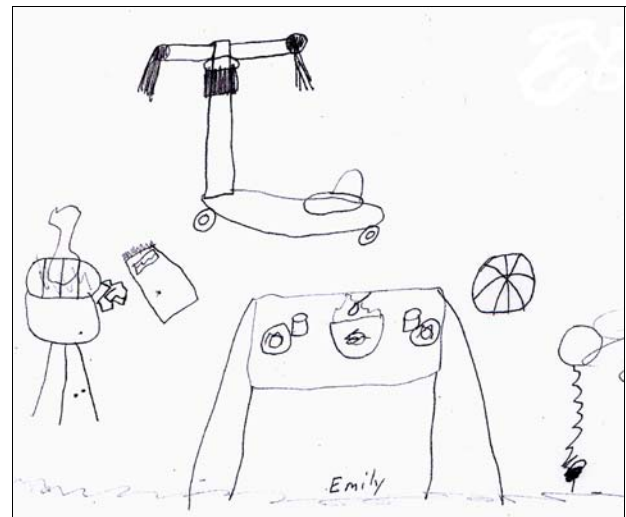
Not that they were two different Churches: they were clearly the *same* Church adapting to two very different sets of historical circumstances. Yet, even as the great basilicas rose above ground—some built on the foundations of ancient cemeteries containing tombs of apostles—the Church always looked back with gratitude to the period of the catacombs, the time of persecution and martyrdom, as an indispensable formation and preparation for its subsequent life and mission in the world. Without the Church of the Catacombs, there would be no Church of the Basilicas.

This point was driven home to me several years later, in the summer between my first and second years of seminary. I had just completed the first week of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at a hospital in the suburbs of Washington DC. For many seminarians, CPE is the first experience of hands-on pastoral ministry—usually as intern chaplains in hospitals, nursing homes, or prisons. That first week had been a challenging, tiring, and stressful time. We had begun to learn the ropes of cold-calling on patients in their hospital rooms and dealing with their many and varied reactions. We had also taken our first turns staying overnight in the hospital on call, waiting to be summoned by the Emergency Room staff to attend to difficult and sometimes heartbreaking pastoral crises.

That Sunday morning, when I arrived at the Anglo-Catholic church in Washington where the seminary had assigned me for parish fieldwork, the MC invited me to vest in a cope for the Solemn Procession they were having that day. I was overawed. It was the first time I had ever worn such a fine vestment – or for that matter *any* vestment beyond a cassock and surplice. As I followed in the figure-eight procession around the aisles of that church, I was suddenly and inexplicably given the understanding that the privilege of wearing the cope was intimately related to the rigors of the preceding week. A military officer's right to wear a ceremonial dress uniform presupposes his continuing readiness to put on combat fatigues and dodge bullets in a war zone. Similarly, as I now realized, without a corresponding readiness to plunge into the difficult and often messy business of Christian mission and ministry, all our vestments, processions, and liturgical choreography amount to only so much empty show.

Here at S. Stephen's, our tradition of liturgical and musical excellence is a great and wonderful gift – and one that as Rector I am totally committed to preserving, fostering, and strengthening. I believe that God has called this parish to the mission of showing forth and handing on this tradition for the life of the Church and the world. And I love living in the splendor of the basilicas!

Yet, from time to time I wonder what would happen if it ever became clear that our Lord were calling us to give up some part or even all of that tradition. Apart from the aesthetic gratification of our liturgy and choral music, would our faith and commitment to this parish community be strong enough to enable us to stay together and continue doing whatever work the Lord gave us to do? Let me be clear: I certainly don't anticipate our being confronted with any such choice anytime soon. But the hypothetical question is always worth asking. For the authenticity and integrity of our life in the basilicas depend upon our continual readiness to return to the catacombs should Christ ever call us to follow him there.



## Ordinary Time

*Before they got to the formal curriculum, Tom Bledsoe's Sunday School Class did a session on Ordinary Time. The theme was finding God and grace during the less festive and "special" times of the year. Lucas and DaVaughn wrote poems and Emily made a drawing.*

### Ordinary time

*by DaVaughn Hooks*

My friends Diego and Jamal  
we like to play football  
There are lots of things that we like  
one of them is to ride our bike.  
One time we went to the store,  
we went in with two dollars, but came out poor.  
Then we all went to the park  
we stayed there until it was dark.

### Ordinary time

*by Lucas Bledsoe*

I like to ride my scooter  
instead of playing the computer.  
When I race my friend Steven,  
we usually end up even.  
My scooter is called a Razor  
it goes as fast as a laser ... beam.  
Steven is my friend  
That is the end.

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3.

The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'"

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

### S. Stephen's Prayer Group

meets Thursdays at 12:30 at Deborah Lawrence's home. For prayers for yourself or for others, please contact Deborah at 621-3630, Cathy Bledsoe, at 246-2194, or send an email to vorkar@cox.net.

**All are welcome to attend!**

**Visit our website at  
[www.sstephens.org](http://www.sstephens.org)**

**Keep up with what's  
happening at  
S. Stephen's Church.**

## THE POWER OF THE KEYS: The Institution of Rectors

by the Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar

[...] At the core of the American Office of Institution are two simple ceremonies. Outside the altar rails the wardens present the new incumbent with the keys of the church; and then he is received by the bishop within the altar rails, and is presented with the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Canons of the General and Diocesan Convention. In these ceremonies the bishop and congregation acknowledge the priest as rector (the Latin word for 'ruler') of the parish, whose right and duty it is to govern the parish in accord with the laws of Christ for his Church. As the new rector says to his congregation: "I ... promise to be a faithful shepherd over you."

In the older language of canon law, a rector is one charged with the 'cure of souls' in a particular parish, with authority in all matters of doctrine, discipline, and worship; and for that purpose is granted 'real, actual, and corporal possession' of the church 'with all the rights, privileges and emoluments thereto belonging.' [...] In the 14<sup>th</sup> canon of the Episcopal Church it is given this blunt modern formulation: "The authority of and responsibility for the conduct of worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish are vested in the Rector" [...]

The extent of the authority conferred upon the rector of the parish can startle those who have thought of the office as if it were a kind of chaplaincy to a voluntary association, or (alternatively) as the manager of the local religious franchise outlet. And at first glance, it *is* somewhat startling, even to me! So let me be clear: nothing in this authority should be construed as taking away from the legitimate function of wardens and vestry ... nor of other organizations and associations in the parish. Whatever powers a rector is granted, are granted that he may be a pastor, a faithful shepherd to his people.

This is clear when we consider the origins of this office over a thousand years ago, when the parish system was first developing under the influence of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Investiture Controversy. What was at stake in that controversy (whose arcane details fill books of church history) was the freedom of the Church's ordained ministry to do its proper work without undue regard for, or pressure from, worldly powers. And that is the principle of the institution of rectors. (It is in some respects akin to the tenure granted university professors.) A parish priest is instituted as rector so that he may be free to do what he has been called to do, and which he has promised to do, without fear or

favor, and without let or hindrance by parishioner, vestry, bishop, or church bureaucrat – that he should be free to administer the doctrine, discipline, and sacraments of Christ as they have been set forth in the Scriptures and received by the Church in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. For in the final analysis he acts as the representative, not of bishop, convention, or synod; nor of wardens, vestry, or congregation, but of Christ, by whose authority he acts, for whom he must speak, and to whom he is finally accountable.

The keys he is given at his institution recall, at a lower level (and are meant to serve) the 'power of the keys' conferred on him at his ordination as a priest. "Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained" (BCP, p. 546, cf. John 20:23; Matthew 9:8). What one must remember is that in Scripture the keys are primarily images of stewardship (Isaiah 22:22). The one who has the keys is not the lord of the household, but his steward, and must use them in accord with his lord's will. The authority to administer Word and Sacraments that is conferred on a priest at his ordination, and to govern a parish at his institution as rector, is startlingly great; but it is only the power of stewardship. "And it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Cor. 4:2). It is not his arbitrary will, nor that of any other person, but the will of Christ, objectively and publicly set forth in Bible and Prayer Book, which he is to carry out. [...]

Amid all the multitudinous activities, opinions, and viewpoints at work inside and outside a parish, there is one whose duty it is to see that all these diverse elements cohere in a unified vision, and that the unity in which they cohere is that willed by Christ for his Church. And if, God willing, he is able to do this work, divine grace supplying all his many faults and weaknesses, then, God willing, all shall be *just as it should be*, in the Church of our ascended Lord, who deserves the best and finest that we have to offer; and who gives us a taste of his joy in return.

**The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar** is Rector of St. John's Church, Savannah, Georgia. The selection above is excerpted with permission from his article "Keys to the Kingdom," published in *The Parish Paper* of St. Johns Church, Vol. 37, No. 28 (June 4, 2006).

November 16

### Agnes of Assisi

(d. 1253)

*Agnes was the younger sister of Saint Clare of Assisi. She left home two weeks after Clare. From the very beginning of her religious life, Agnes became noted for her virtue. Her companions believed that she had discovered a new road to perfection.*

The family tried to bring Agnes back [from following Clare], dragging her from the monastery, pulling her by the hair and kicking her repeatedly. Her sister Clare intervened and suddenly Agnes' body became so heavy that several knights could not budge her. When her uncle tried to strike her, he was immediately paralyzed.

*The Wit and Wisdom of the Saints*

A Rabbi and a Catholic Priest met at the town's annual 4th of July picnic. Old friends, they began their usual banter.

"This baked ham is really delicious," the priest teased the rabbi. "You really ought to try it. I know it's against your religion, but I can't understand why such a wonderful food should be forbidden! You don't know what you're missing. You just haven't lived until you've tried Mrs. Hall's prized Virginia Baked Ham. Tell me, Rabbi, when are you going to break down and try it?"

The rabbi looked at the priest with a big grin, and said, "At your wedding."

## Looking Towards Christmas

Has anyone noticed that Christmas paraphernalia is already in the stores – and it isn't even Hallowe'en yet. As the air becomes crisp and the first signs of "The Holiday Season" appear, many people start to have a sense of foreboding and stress. We all know why, and we all know what to do about it. The question is, do we, will we, dare we do it?

Do your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews etc really need more things? Or do they rather need to hear from you that the birth of Jesus Christ was the greatest gift that has ever been bestowed on mankind, and that we, and they, ought to suitably honor this at Christmas? Is there any other way to stem the materialistic tsunami that occurs every year at this time?

Ask them to imagine how much good they could do for others if even half the money spent on Christmas stuff were directed toward charitable ends. Ask them to imagine the smiles on the faces of children who would receive food, warm clothing, shelter, medical care in lieu of the electronic toys and games that will inevitably accumulate as junk in their own bedrooms and family rooms. And ask them further to imagine how, by forgoing these things, they could also contribute to the well being of their larger family, the Church, which is where Christ has promised to be present to us?

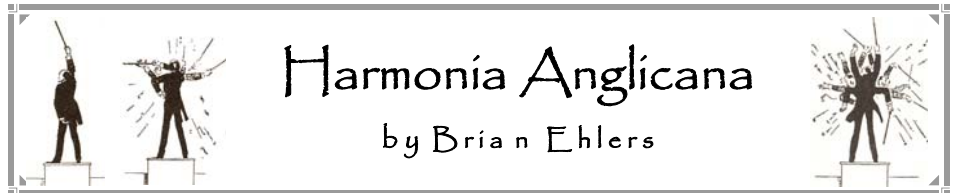
Individual decisions can have an enormous cumulative effect. If you give them idols, they will worship idols, and our churches will be more and more empty. If you give them your love and honor of Christ, they will love and honor Christ, who said "Let the little children come to me...."

It's that simple.

*Ed Zeldin*

It is essential, then, to be on guard against remembrance of wrongs, for many terrible consequences develop from it: envy, sadness, malicious talk. The evil of these vices is lethal, even if they seem to occur in small doses.

*Life of Syncretica*



S. Stephens's Schola Cantorum has two new members. They are both students at Brown. Because we are located on the Brown campus, S. Stephen's leadership has been proactive at inviting Brown students to worship with us. It occurred to me as I was writing this piece that our music program in particular has been quite successful at attracting Brown students. It's a win-win: good for them and good for us to have their talents.

**Noble MacFarlane**, bass/baritone, is in his first year at Brown University. He will concentrate in Neuroscience. At Brown he is in chorus under the direction of Fred Jodry and studying organ with Mark Steinbach, the University Organist. Back home in the San Francisco Bay Area, Noble took organ lessons with Steve Main, the minister of music at Piedmont Community Church in Piedmont, CA. He began his church music career in the children's choir at St. Luke's Church in San Francisco, under the direction of Jonathan Dimmock. In fourth grade, he became a chorister in the Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, Choir of Men and Boys. After graduating, he became a chorister in the troubadours, the main performance group of the Pacific Boychoir Academy, directed by Kevin Fox. In his short time with the Pacific Boychoir Academy, he performed in numerous concerts, some with the San Francisco Symphony, including Benjamin Britten's War requiem and Gustav Mahler's third symphony, the recording of which won a grammy award.

**Trevor Pollack**, tenor/baritone, is a sophomore music concentrator at Brown University from Cleveland, Ohio. He has studied piano for many years, and is currently study voice through Brown's Applied Music Program. He also began studying organ one year ago. Trevor's interest lies mainly in choral music. He sang with the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus while in high school, and with the Cleveland Orchestra Blossom Festival Chorus for the past two summers. Trevor is also very interested in musical theatre, and musically directed Brown Musical Forum's production of *Urinetown* this past spring.

We enthusiastically welcome these two new additions to the Schola Cantorum. I'm sure they will learn a lot about music performance from James Busby and a lot about our Solemn High Mass by being an important and integral part of it.

### Liturgical Music

November, 2006

*Unless otherwise indicated, the following are sung at the Solemn High Mass on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.*

**2 NOVEMBER--COMMEMORATION OF ALL FAITHFUL DEPARTED: ALL SOULS DAY (THURSDAY 5:30 p.m.)**  
Missa pro defunctis.....Plainchant

**5 NOVEMBER-- SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS**  
Mass for five voices.....William Byrd  
Faire is the heaven.....William H. Harris

**12 NOVEMBER--REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**  
Requiem, Op. 9.....Maurice Durufé

**19 NOVEMBER-- PENTECOST XXIV**  
Messe de Tournai.....Anon. XIV Cent.  
My days are gone like a shadow.....John Blow

**26 NOVEMBER--LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: CHRIST THE KING**  
with St. Dunstan Consort  
Messe a quatre voix, **HII**.....  
.....Marc-Antoine Charpentier  
Audi vi vocem de caelo....Pierre de Manchicourt



S. Stephen's Church in Providence  
114 George Street  
Providence, RI 02906  
*Address Correction Requested*



*The Meeting at the Golden Gate, by Giotto, 1303-05*

Commemoration of  
All the Faithful Departed:

**ALL SOULS DAY**

Thursday, November 2  
5:30 p.m.

Missa pro defunctis...Plainchant