



# The S. Stephen

## Pentecost 2012

Vol. 11, No. 6

**My dear people:**

***From the Rector***

Participating in the diocesan Search and Nomination Committee for the next Bishop of Rhode Island, I was struck by how many of the clergy we interviewed described their ministries in terms of fostering *change*. Nothing I say here is meant to reflect negatively on the five nominees in the final slate. But during the early interviews one candidate after another described their pastoral experience in terms of a repeated process of arriving in a new parish marked by dysfunction and stagnation, discerning the changes that were needed, building a new consensus in favor of change, overcoming entrenched opposition by those with a vested interest in the *status quo*, instituting the necessary changes, and inaugurating a new era of vitality and growth. Priests in today's Episcopal Church seem to have been trained to see themselves as "change agents" whose efforts, if successful, will turn dying congregations around and give them a new lease on life. Yet for all the success stories, I have also heard too many stories of congregations that have descended into division and turmoil when new rectors tried to push ill-advised changes too far and too fast.

Reflecting in turn on my own ministry, I realized that I do not see my priestly role primarily in terms of being a change-agent. Maybe I missed that class in seminary. True, in my time at S. Stephen's thus far, I have not been afraid to institute changes that I thought necessary in the areas under my jurisdiction—particularly in a series of tweaks to the Sunday liturgy during my first several years here. And making S. Stephen's host to the Episcopal Campus Ministry did require some change to a mindset which, when I arrived, saw Brown as the enemy and simply wanted to maintain the purity of our liturgical and musical life in splendid isolation from the academic community surrounding us. But again, fostering change is not the primary way in which I see my calling.

Part of the parish priest's role admittedly is to facilitate change among his parishioners by calling them to repentance and conversion, the Greek term for which, *metanoia*, is usually translated literally as "change of mind." But within the life of the community, he is called above all to maintain continuity in teaching and tradition. In the pastoral Epistles, for example, Saint Paul exhorts his youthful charge Timothy to guard the truth that has been entrusted to him (I Tim 6:20; II Tim 1:14); to continue in what he has learned, knowing from whom he learned it (II Tim 3:14); and to hand on this truth to those who will in turn be able to teach it to others (II Tim 2:2).

It may be objected that no less an authority for Anglo-Catholics than John Henry Newman famously wrote: "To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often."

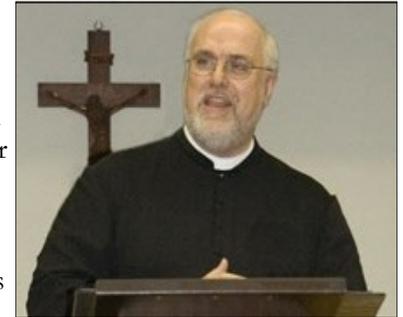
But it takes only a glancing familiarity with Newman's thought to realize that the change he has in mind is not fundamental or radical, but rather organic and developmental. The passage from which this quotation is taken likens the progress of a great idea or philosophy through history to a river which may seem clearest and purest near its source but becomes strongest "when its bed has become deep, broad, and full." As it encounters new situations, new controversies, and new opponents, "old principles reappear under new forms. *It changes with them to remain the same*. In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often" (*Development of Christian Doctrine*, 1845, Chapter 1, Section 1, Paragraph 7; emphasis added). The great challenge, then, is to discern which changes are necessary precisely in order to remain the same!

In this light, what is especially welcome to me about the program of our consultant, Peter Saros, is implied in its title: "Parish Development." In thoroughly Newmanesque fashion, it is about development rather than change *per se*. As we conclude our first year of implementing this program, what stands out for me is that this approach begins not by asking: "What is wrong with our parish?" or "What do we need to change?" but rather: "What is right with our parish?" "What strengths do we have to build on?" "How can we hold fast to what is good and make it better?" Those who see Peter Saros's program as a potential vehicle for advancing their own agendas for radical change are thus likely to be disappointed. But those who want to grow by building on our strengths and developing our traditions are likely to find the program a wonderful opportunity all around.

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Turning to some more immediate considerations, I am pleased to announce that by appointment of Bishop Wolf, and with the consent of the Wardens and Vestry, the Rev. Deacon Leroy ("Buck") Close will be assigned to S. Stephen's effective July 1. Unlike "transitional" deacons

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who are preparing for ordination to the priesthood, Deacon Close is what used to be known as a “permanent,” “perpetual,” or “vocational” deacon, which means simply that he has been ordained to exercise the proper ministry of this order without any thought of further ordination. Deacon Close recently completed his previous assignment at St. George’s Church, Central Falls. He is Chairperson of the diocesan Hispanic Ministries Commission, Director of the George Hunt Center in downtown Providence, and head of an organization engaged in mission work in Haiti. While his responsibilities at S. Stephen’s will largely be confined to assisting liturgically and occasionally preaching on Sunday mornings, part of the deacon’s responsibility is “to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world ...” and “to show Christ’s people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself” (BCP 1979, 543). So, his presence will doubtless open up new opportunities for parishioners to become involved in the work of the Church in the wider community.

Since Fr. Tuck is now approaching the end of his third year at S. Stephen’s, and his assignment was initially contemplated as lasting two or three years, several people have asked whether he will be staying on. The answer is yes, for the time being. Fr. Tuck’s ministry has richly blessed our parish. He has grown beautifully in the exercise of priestly ministry, and is clearly ready for a call to a parish of his own, as rector, vicar, or priest-in-charge. He is in conversation with several parishes about a possible call; however, it is a tough time to be looking for such a position. At its most recent meeting, the Vestry expressed its desire is to keep Fr. Tuck in his current position at S. Stephen’s until he accepts a call elsewhere, and furthermore to recruit a new candidate to this position after he moves on. The one uncertainty at this point is whether the Diocese will maintain funding of its half of the position beyond the end of 2012. However, we are committed to finding ways to continue all aspects of the ministry that Fr. Tuck has begun so successfully in his three years with us so far. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as they contemplate the next steps in their journey.

In the Diocese of Rhode Island, we are encountering several major transitions. The Cathedral of St. John held its last service on Sunday 22 April; and in the weeks since we have had a significant number of its former parishioners visiting our Sunday services. While most of them are still “church-shopping,” some have indicated a definite interest in joining S. Stephen’s. Indeed, we have already added a few of them to our acolyte, lector, and usher rotas! My judgment was that since they were already exercising these ministries in their own parish, which shut down through little fault of their own, we ought to give them the opportunity to continue in the equivalent ministries here without interruption if they so desire. I am very pleased with the warm welcome our parishioners have given visitors and newcomers from the Cathedral so far, and I urge that it continue.

The Diocesan Convention will meet to elect a new bishop on June 2 at St. Paul’s Church, Pawtucket. The bishop-elect will be consecrated to the episcopate on November 17. A large gathering of convention delegates, clergy, and interested laity met the five nominees at the all-day “Walkabout” at St. Andrew’s School, Barrington, on Saturday 12 May. As a member of the Search and Nomination Committee, I took considerable satisfaction in the general perception of those present that the slate features some very impressive candidates indeed. Please keep the five nominees in your prayers, as well as our Diocesan Convention delegates: Fr. Tuck and myself, Charles Calverley, and Phoebe Pettingell; and our Alternates: Bill Dilworth and Julia Steiny.

Bishop Wolf will continue in her capacity as Ordinary of the Diocese until the day of her successor’s consecration. She will be making a Visitation to S. Stephen’s on Sunday 17 June, the day of our annual Parish Barbecue. Also, since she has been such a good friend to S. Stephen’s over the years, we are planning to give the annual Memorial Recital in her honor on Sunday 21 October as an occasion of bidding her Godspeed and expressing our appreciation for her ministry. Stay tuned for more details.

Elsewhere in this issue of *The S. Stephen*, there is more information on the Annual Mass of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (CBS) on Saturday 9 June, featuring the Rt. Rev. Dorsey Henderson, retired Bishop of Upper South Carolina, as the preacher. This event is likely to attract visitors from the wider region—I have already received inquiries on directions from people in the Boston area—as well as from further afield. I am therefore asking all parishioners to please make a special effort to come out and support this event, so that our visitors may see and spread the news of what a vibrant and active parish we have here.

This letter comes with all good wishes and prayers for a blessed Pentecost, Trinity, and Corpus Christi. I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

*Fr. John D. Alexander +*

Fr. John D. Alexander



## From the Curate

By Fr. Michael G. Tuck



As campus minister, I try to stay on top of what's happening at the university by reading the student newspaper. Every once in a while, an article or an opinion piece about religion is published, and that causes interesting dialogues on campus. A few weeks ago, we had one of these exchanges about the relationship between religion and spirituality. This caused me to reflect, once again on the differences between religion and spirituality, and how the campus ministry is addressing these two needs.

In much of the dialogue on campus, spirituality and religion are set in almost stark opposition to each other. Many students describe religion as corporate and organized, while spirituality is the expression of an individual's feelings, perceptions and practices in regard to God. Unfortunately, these distinctions fail to properly assess the essential relationship between spirituality and religion—a relationship we try to affirm in the campus ministry.

Usually, those who advocate for religion do understand that this is not an either/or issue. However, for today's students, it is hard to argue or explain that the structure and pattern of worship provided by religion is essential to building up a mature spirituality. In part, this is difficult to explain because too many students have not experienced religion in this way, and have little or no exposure to people who demonstrate mature spirituality formed by religion practice. Those who advocate for a more individualized sense of spirituality often appreciate their dependence on existing religious traditions, but nonetheless fail to understand that it is through deeply engaging with those traditions that the spiritual experiences that they seek are usually found.

In this environment, the Episcopal campus ministry has focused on building up a community based on praying together: specifically by engaging in Evening Prayer together every Sunday evening. What began as an expedient (since I began this work as a deacon) has proved to be the strength of our community. The Anglican service of Evening Prayer is highly structured, certainly compared to forms of Protestant worship. We are bound by the lectionary for the choice of both the psalms and readings. Yet the service also allows time and space for personal prayer and reflection. We reflect on the psalms through antiphonal recitation, on the Scriptures through periods of silence, and on our lives through silent prayer and intercession. Our spirituality is nurtured by structure and community. Sometimes the passages appointed for us may be difficult—sometimes our lives are difficult. Sometimes we are forced to confront things we would rather not. Sometimes we are forced to grow a little bit.

At the same time, Evening Prayer is a relatively easy way for students to begin to experience this interplay between religion and spirituality. Using this service as our foundation, we are planning an excellent program for next year that will build on what we have been doing. The program has grown significantly over the past three years, and I am sure that next year will be equally successful. Thank you all for your continued support.

## Confirmation

By Nathan Callanan

During the past few years, St. Stephens Church has had an increasing effect on my life. At first church seemed like a burden and a bore, so confirmation was the last thing on my mind. Since I started attending church, however, I have been baptized, started serving on the altar, and met many amazing people. Progressively, St. Stephens has become a much more fulfilling and desirable part of my life. My decision to be confirmed, along with my brother Devon, Lucas Bledsoe, and Brian James, was a manifestation of my interest in and commitment to the Church.

During the confirmation classes Father Alexander (and on one occasion Father Tuck) helped prepare us. These classes were educational in a fun and interactive way. I thought they would just be hour-long lectures: instead, we did activities, read from the Bible, and had discussions. Each class began with a prayer, and over the course of eight weeks we learned about everything from the Bible, the Creeds, and the Sacraments, to how the date of Easter is determined and what the different vestments symbolize. I was especially interested in the symbolism of the building and how the nave, choir, and sanctuary represent the Church Militant, Expectant, and Triumphant, respectively. The classes helped me understand the word of God and teachings of Jesus, as well as how the Church works, and this helped me appreciate my confirmation even more.

The confirmation was held at St. Martins Church. There were around thirty others being confirmed and reaffirmed. During the mass, all of the confirmands went up to the altar to make

vows and receive a solemn blessing. After being confirmed, I reflected on how I have changed since I first began attending church five years ago, and looked forward to building upon my faith in the future.



## AN INTELLIGENT RELIGION?

*By Father Alexander*

*"I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes ..."* (Matthew 11:25).

On occasion over the years, I've heard past and present parishioners remark that a feature of S. Stephen's they value most is its well-educated congregation. Especially owing to our location in the midst of an Ivy League university campus, they continue, we should intentionally present ourselves as a "thinking-person's parish," marked not only by the cultural sophistication of our liturgy and music, but also by what might be called an "intelligent religion," a reasoned faith. In this way, we can differentiate ourselves from those fundamentalists and biblical literalists who give Christianity a bad name in today's world by their ignorant and unenlightened attitudes.

While I sympathize with some aspects of this strategy, I also see some dangers in it. In my last Rector's Letter, I wrote of the pitfalls of Pietism, an approach to spirituality emphasizing the role of religious emotion to an extent that can engender anti-intellectualism and obscurantism. Now I want to explore the opposite danger: namely, the temptation to make reason and intelligence the objects of an idolatry that can ultimately become destructive of faith itself.

What is the proper relation between faith and reason in the Christian life? For me, one of the most satisfactory answers to that question comes from the eleventh-century monk, philosopher-theologian, and Archbishop of Canterbury Saint Anselm (1033-1109). Anselm summed up his approach in the Latin tag *fides quaerens intelligentiam*—"faith seeking understanding." One of the most powerful minds of his age or any other, Anselm accorded to reason and intelligence an essential place in the Christian life, and to the scholar and intellectual an honored role in the life of the Church. His contributions to Christian theology included the ontological argument for the existence of God, and the satisfaction theory of the Atonement—both

of which remain no less brilliant and thought-provoking today for having been the subject of extensive debate and criticism in the centuries since he wrote.

Still, Anselm's approach of "faith seeking understanding" affirms that in theological reflection in particular, faith comes first. It is the primary *datum*. Rational reflection is secondary. It seeks a reasoned understanding of the truths revealed by God—in Scripture, Tradition, and authoritative Church teaching. The online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* aptly paraphrases "faith seeking understanding" as "an active love of God seeking a deeper knowledge of God." The key point is that we do

**"Christianity taught men that love is worth more than intelligence"—Jacques Maritain**

not reason our way into faith; that would be "understanding seeking faith," and it does not work because in Christ God reveals a Truth that we could never have figured out for ourselves. Rather, we receive faith as a gift from God, and then employ our God-given reason to tease out its implications—for example, by trying to resolve its apparent contradictions, or by applying its teachings to the ethical challenges of the contemporary world. The intellectual effort involved in doing so is itself an expression of love for God. The scholar's study of ancient biblical or patristic texts, or the theologian's abstract speculations, can be just as much acts of love and devotion—if undertaken in the right spirit—as the rapturous prayers of the contemplative mystic.

Yet not everyone has this vocation. Not all are called to be theologians, philosophers, scholars, or intellectuals. But again, faith comes first. And there is an indispensable and honored place in the life of the Church for those people who are sometimes described as "the simple faithful."

Advocates of "an intelligent religion" may be tempted to dismiss "a simple faith" as precisely the sort of funda-



*Saint Anselm*

mentalism to which they want to present an alternative. But the matter is not so clear-cut. What liberal and progressive Christians find objectionable about the various types of fundamentalism is the perception not so much that their adherents are simple, as that they are opinionated, intolerant, and bigoted.

(Ironically, mainline liberal Christianity can exhibit a similar

intolerance, often marked by unattractive attitudes of scorn, snobbery, and condescension, towards those whom it labels fundamentalists. Clearly, there is plenty of intolerance and bigotry to go around.) But the key point is that most varieties of opinionated, intolerant, and bigoted religion *are not unintelligent*. On the contrary, many of the so-called fundamentalisms feature elaborate and sophisticated chains of reasoning from their premises to their conclusions. Their problem is not that they are stupid but that they are *wrong*. Or, more precisely: that they fail to exhibit the qualities of love, compassion, tolerance, and fairness that our tradition has come to identify as among its key values.

The point that I am trying to make can be illustrated by two of my favorite quotations from the twentieth-century French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882-1973). Criticizing certain philosophical schools which he regarded as false, Maritain wrote: "A poor peasant who believes that God created Heaven and earth and who believes in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar knows more about truth, Being, and substance, than Plotinus, Spinoza, and the whole of Bergsonism." Now admittedly Maritain does not here suggest that



Jacques Maritain

such a poor peasant has a deeper understanding of reality than a Catholic theologian or a neo-Thomist philosopher like Maritain himself. Nonetheless it is clear that he esteems the poor peasant's simple faith. One need not be an intellectual nor even particularly

well-educated to know the Truth who sets us free.

Maritain takes us closer to the heart of the matter—no pun intended—when he writes that "Christianity taught men that love is worth more than intelligence." The poor

peasant of the previous quotation, we may surmise, knows more of reality than the philosophers precisely insofar as he loves the God who created heaven and earth and Jesus in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. As one of the foremost intellectuals of the twentieth century, Maritain cannot be accused of anti-intellectualism. But it is not anti-intellectualism to affirm the primacy of love over knowledge in the Christian life.

Here at S. Stephen's we are indeed committed to the pursuit of an intelligent religion. Through our continuing programs of preaching and teaching, discussion and debate, we play our own small part in the Christian theological project of faith seeking understanding. We value the indispensable role of the intellect, as well as of the will and emotions, in the fullest possible expression of the Christian life. We esteem the scholars and intellectuals in our midst for their contribution to Church's life. At the same time, however, we must always make an honored place in our parish and in our Church for the simple faithful. Like the "holy fools" of the Russian Orthodox tradition, they have much to teach us. Perhaps the most important lesson is that on the Last Day, we shall be judged on the basis not of how much we knew, but of how well we loved.



**This is the final issue of  
The S. Stephen for the 2011—2012  
academic year. Our sincere thanks  
to all our contributors.**

**Anselm summed up his approach in the Latin tag *fides quaerens intelligentiam*—"faith seeking understanding."**

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## CONFRATERNITY? WHAT'S THAT?

*By William Dilworth*

By now you've heard that the American branch of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (CBS), an Anglo-Catholic devotional society, will hold its Annual Mass at S. Stephen's on Saturday, 9 June. You might not be familiar with the CBS or other Anglican devotional societies, though. After reading this article, I hope you'll not only know a little more about the CBS but will want to join us on the ninth.

To understand the CBS you'll need to know a little Anglo-Catholic history. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the Church of England's Catholic heritage was in danger. People rarely went to Communion, even on Easter. Priests and bishops denied basic Christian teaching, and Parliament ran the Church as just one more part of the government. To meet the threat Edward Bouverie Pusey, John Henry Newman and others made bold claims for the Church of England's Catholic Faith and began what we know as the Oxford Movement. They argued that the Church of England did not begin as a new body at the Reformation, but was the same ancient Church whose roots went back to Roman times. They insisted that Anglican bishops were the successors of the Apostles and that the Sacraments were real channels of grace.

By the 1850s the Oxford Movement gave place to a generation that wanted to give new emphasis not only to the Church's Catholic teachings, but also to living out those teachings in the liturgy. They were the Ritualists, and their stand for Catholic faith and practice met strong opposition. Mobs violently interrupted church services. Priests faced imprisonment for things we take for granted, like using candles on the altar, colored vestments, and the sign of the Cross. A group called the Society of the Holy Cross – known as the SSC from its Latin name – began in 1855 as a way for those priests to support one another's work and spiritual life.

In 1862 members of the SSC and others began a group open not only to priests but also to lay people. This new group, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, had the goal of increasing devotion to Our Lord in the Eucharist. It urged its members to go to Mass each Sunday and Holy Day, to take Communion often, and to make careful acts of preparation and thanksgiving. It encouraged practices like making visits to the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Its members prayed for each other and for the intentions of the wider Church and world each day, and gave poor parishes the vessels and vestments needed to celebrate Mass. The CBS still does all these things, both in England and throughout the Anglican world. In 1867 the CBS started a branch in

the Episcopal Church, a ward of which we have in our parish; if you have attended the Daily Office and Mass here during the week, you have heard the priest ask you to pray for the intentions listed for that day in the CBS's Intercession Paper.



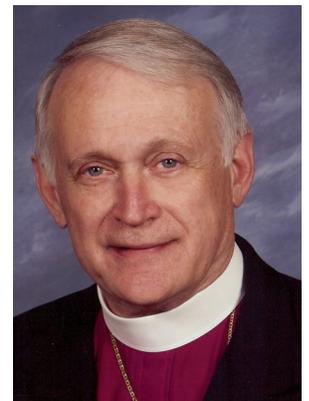
Just as the CBS focuses on the Eucharist, other groups promote different aspects of the Catholic Faith. The Guild of All Souls encourages prayer for the departed, while the Society of Mary furthers devotion to the Virgin. These and other groups make up the devotional societies of the Anglican Communion. When crucial parts of the Church's teaching need defense, they provide it. They are an important part of Anglo-Catholic life, and well worth supporting.

When members of the CBS from all over the United States meet here in June, they will represent a group that has witnessed to Catholic teaching on the Eucharist for 150 years. Come to the Mass and join them, and

stay for the catered luncheon that will follow. For information on the event, please visit the parish website at [www.sstephens.org](http://www.sstephens.org). And for news about meetings of the parish CBS ward, keep your eye on *The S. Stephen*.

### Bishop Dorsey F. Henderson to Preach

The Rt. Rev. Dorsey Henderson, Superior of the American Branch of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, and retired bishop of Upper South Carolina (1995-2009), will preach at the Annual Mass of the Confraternity, at S. Stephen's, on June 9, 2012, at 11:00 a.m. Bishop Henderson is also a distinguished lawyer who currently heads the Disciplinary Board of Bishops for the Episcopal Church. Before his election to Upper South Carolina, he served as Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in the Diocese of Fond du Lac, and before that as rector of St. Benedict's Episcopal Church in Plantation, Florida. He is a decorated former Air Force officer, and a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary. We are privileged to welcome Bishop Henderson to S. Stephen's. Come hear him preach and then talk with him at the luncheon following the Mass.



## ACQUISITION OF THE WATERMAN SERMONS: A PIECE OF OUR HERITAGE

*By Richard Noble*

The Rev'd Henry Waterman served as Rector of S. Stephen's from 1841 to 1845, and then again from 1850 to 1874. In his history of S. Stephen's, Fr. Catir describes how Waterman did more than anyone else to shape the identity of the parish:

*With the arrival of Doctor Waterman, a new era in the life of Saint Stephen's Church began. Though not the founder of this parish, he was its re-founder, as it were, and its re-creator. Doctor Waterman was an early Tractarian of the school of Keble and Pusey ... [He] built the complete foundation upon which the contemporary characteristic parish life of Saint Stephen's now rests.*

In February 2012, Richard Mammana, trolling Ebay for odd items related to his interests, began buying sermon manuscripts by Henry Waterman, which had recently been turning up in small lots on the site. Mammana is founder of Project Canterbury, an editor of Anglicans Online, a frequent contributor to *The Living Church*, and currently a student in the Yale Divinity School with a special interest in nineteenth-century church history. On February 26 he sent an e-mail message to Father Alexander, telling him about an extraordinary discovery:

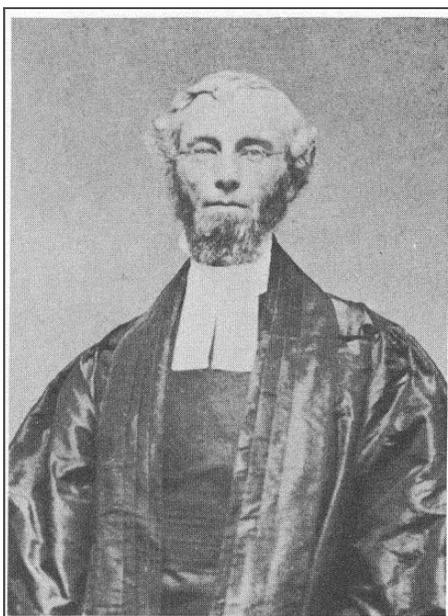
*... a large group of Waterman manuscript sermons (more than 450) for sale in upstate New York, and I wonder if there is a way for them to end up back at S. Stephen's. I don't know the provenance of them, but I was able to purchase a few on eBay before finding out that they are actually the tip of an iceberg.*

This message was shortly followed up:

*I have won and paid for ... 20 manuscript sermons by Waterman. I wrote to the seller at the very beginning of the auctions and asked if he would accept a bulk price for all of them because I wanted to donate them to S. Stephen's, and he refused. ... Since the end of the auction, he has reverted to me and indicated that he has 443 more sermons left. I don't want them to be dispersed ...*

Mr. Mammana was happy to continue the negotiation he had started, but he was in no position to do as he originally intended, and donate the sermons to S. Stephen's: this was a much larger collection than he had first thought. In short, it

was up to those of us who are responsible for the past, as well as the present and future of the church, to take responsibility. While the total purchase price—just over \$6,000—initially seemed high, inquiries with a highly experienced local antiquarian bookseller revealed that, per individual manuscript, it represented a significant bargain. We needed to act quickly: this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, so the purchase needed to be treated as an emergency expenditure. The collection arrived in March, in three tightly packed boxes.



*The Reverend Henry Waterman, DD,  
third rector, 1841 - 1845;  
fifth rector, 1850 - 1874*

I have made an initial inspection of the collection; there are indeed something on the order of 460 or 470 sermons. Most are neatly written in blue books, with a record of the dates and places where they were preached, over the whole course of Waterman's life as a clergyman. A sermon first given in 1835 will often have been preached again into the 1870s (not always as originally written—there are many revisions in some of them). There are a few more fragmentary manuscripts that make an exact count impossible at this time. The sermons will eventually be placed on deposit at the University of Rhode Island, as part of the S. Stephen's archive already housed there. In consultation with Richard Mammana and others, I plan to organize the collection and prepare a "finding aid" with multiple indexes to topics and texts, as well as places and dates of delivery.

This is a remarkably apt punctuation to our sesqui-centennial observances, and the coming launch of the new collection of historical essays now in preparation—which will now include something on this significant historical acquisition. We plan to recover as much of the \$6,000 outlay as we can, and are launching an appeal to that end, to include the wider community of the Church, and especially those with an interest in the history of Anglo-Catholicism in the United States. If you feel moved to contribute to defray the costs of this collection—important both to our parish and to the Episcopal Church's history—please make your check payable to S. Stephen's Church [114 George Street, Providence RI, 02906] and write Waterman Sermons in the memo line. A contribution to this cause would also make a splendid thanksgiving or memorial gift to lovers of our Church and of history.

## AN EASTER SERMON

*Given at S. Stephen's Church, April 8, 2012*

Spring is here. Even after a mild winter, the lengthening of days, the return of warmer temperatures, and the budding of flowers and leaves suggest a world coming back to life. No wonder that the Christian Church early on discerned in the springtime renewal of nature an image of Christ's resurrection. The very word "Easter" preserves this connection. In other languages, the names for Easter are variations on the Jewish word "Passover" – in Greek "*Pascha*," in Italian "*Pasqua*," in French "*Pâque*," in Spanish "*Pascua*." But the English word "Easter" like the German "*Oster*" comes instead from the name of the Teutonic goddess of the Spring and the dawn. No doubt, as Christian missionaries were evangelizing the Germanic tribes, they presented Christ's Resurrection as the fulfillment of everything towards which the pagan springtime fertility rites pointed – the true victory of life over death.

People today often comment that these associations are lost in the Southern Hemisphere where Easter takes place in the Fall. The temptation when this is pointed out is to say, well, of course, the true meaning of Easter doesn't concern springtime after all. Surely the spiritual message of the festival stands independently of the season of the year. The blossoms of Spring are "only a metaphor" for the promise of Resurrection and eternal life that's at the heart of the festival ... Aren't they?

Well, not quite. Leaving aside the question of whether such a metaphor is ever really "only a metaphor," I want to suggest that the springtime renewal of the Earth is also an essential image of what Easter is all about. And while it's perfectly possible to keep the feast with all possible joy in the Southern Hemisphere, nonetheless something about the traditional springtime imagery remains normative for the fullest possible appreciation of what we're celebrating.

To see how the Church's theology has developed over the centuries, it's often instructive to consult what may seem an unlikely source: the Hymnal. When we look in its Easter section, we're apt to notice certain shifts in emphases as we move down through the centuries from the most ancient hymns to the more modern and contemporary ones. By and large, the ancient hymns tend to depict Christ's Resurrection as the triumph in a struggle between elemental forces: "death and life have contended in that combat stupendous." Moreover, the consequences of Christ's victory over death are portrayed in cosmic terms entailing not only new life for human beings but also the renewal of all crea-

tion. Consider, lines written in the sixth century that we sang at the beginning of this Mass:

Lo, the fair beauty of Earth,  
from the death of the winter arising:  
Every good gift of the year,  
now with its Master returns!"

As we move on into the Renaissance and Modernity, however, the Easter hymnody becomes more individualistic and subjective. The focus comes to rest more on what the Resurrection means for you and me personally – and how it promises us eternal life in what might seem another world than this one. Consider these lines from a hymn written in the eighteenth century:

Jesus lives! Our hearts know well,  
naught from us his love shall sever;  
life, nor death, nor powers of hell  
tear us from his keeping ever.

Jesus lives! To him the throne  
over all the world is given:  
may we go where he has gone,  
rest and reign with him in heaven.

**Christ's bodily resurrection marks the beginning of a new creation ... setting the whole material universe free from the processes of dissolution and entropy that tend towards darkness and extinction.**

What this shift in emphasis reflects is that, unlike Eastern Orthodoxy, modern Western Christianity often loses sight of an essential aspect of the Easter proclamation: namely, that Christ's Resurrection from the dead marks the beginning of an irreversible process by which not only human beings but also the whole material creation, in all its complexity and interdependence, is being restored, renewed, rejuvenated, and gathered into the Kingdom of God. It's not just about us human beings, but about the flowers, plants, trees, birds, fish, and animals as well. Indeed, it's about all creation from the nearest subatomic particle to

the farthest nebula. We are not saved from this world, but rather in and with this world – a world that God originally pronounced "very good" at its creation.

The theological basis for this understanding of the resurrection is the affirmation that at his Incarnation the Son of God came down from heaven to share not only in our human nature, but in the very condition of created material existence itself. Through him all things were created in the beginning. It follows that his bodily resurrection marks the beginning of a new creation, not only setting us free from the power of sin and death, but also setting the whole material universe free from the processes of dissolution and entropy

that tend towards darkness and extinction.

Scripture attests to this truth in multiple places. In his Letter to the Romans, Saint Paul explicitly links the salvation of humanity with the renewal of creation: *“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God ... because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God”* (Romans 8:19, 21) And that passage so beloved of our Evangelical brethren holding placards at football games begins, *“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ...”* (John 3:16). He does not say, “God so loved humanity that he gave his only Son ...” but “God so loved the world ...” And the word John uses in the original Greek for “world” is none other than *cosmos*.

C.S. Lewis’s children’s book, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, illustrates this theme in a wonderfully vivid way. In the story, four children staying in a country house find a magical wardrobe that turns out to be a portal to another world, Narnia, populated by talking animals and mythical creatures such as fawns and centaurs. But the land has fallen under an evil spell cast by a wicked queen, so that for a hundred years it has lain under the snow of a perpetual winter. The Christ figure in the story is the powerful lion Aslan, who ultimately dies and rises again to break the evil queen’s power. And the sign of Aslan’s arrival in Narnia is the beginning of a thaw in the snow and ice. By the end of the story, when Aslan is victorious and the queen defeated, summer has come and the land is verdant and thriving with life.

**The springtime renewal of the Earth is an essential image of what Easter is all about.**

Now, while Lewis got some of his ideas from Norse mythology, it’s also clear that his vision of Narnia restored is thoroughly rooted in a classically Christian world view. The Christian hope is not simply for personal immortality in an ethereal realm of disembodied spirits, but for bodily resurrection in a new creation. The Resurrection of Christ thus contains the promise not only of eternal life for you and me, but also of a cosmos restored, of Paradise regained.

This vision of the Resurrection has a number of practical implications for us today, not least in relation to the ecological crisis. If God so loved the cosmos that he gave his only Son, then as Christians we can hardly countenance or condone the continuing destruction of the natural environment perpetrated by our technological civilization and consumerist culture. I don’t want to belabor the point, but care for creation is an absolute imperative for all who take seriously this understanding of the cosmic consequences of Christ’s Resurrection.

Today, then, is a day for rejoicing. Spring is here. And the season’s beauty gives us an anticipatory foretaste of that final Springtime awaiting the entire creation in the life of the world to come, thanks to the Resurrection of Christ, which we celebrate today.



## THE TREASURER'S CORNER

*By Ransom Widmer*

The parish development dinner on May 17<sup>th</sup> concluded an academic year filled with impressive accomplishments: a successful Stewardship Campaign, the establishment of the Promotions, Special Events, and Greeters committees, and the adoption of a Parish Development Plan.

The S. Stephen's Parish Development Plan envisions our Great Hall remodeled to provide an attractive, well-equipped space for social and cultural events. These events, in turn, will provide the parish with opportunities to bring new people through our doors for us to meet and greet. Some of these guests will be potential new members. Unfortunately, the Great Hall's present condition is currently not adequate to the task.

And so, a key project for the coming academic year will be to conduct a Capital Budget Campaign, utilizing the experience gained from last year's Stewardship. This will provide a procedure for raising funds for major repairs and improvements which cannot be financed out of our operating budget. The primary use of the funds collected will be the repair and improvement of the Great Hall so that it can function as envisioned by the Parish Development Plan.

The campaign will continue for three calendar years: 2013 through 2015. This coming Fall, the vestry will invite the entire parish family to dinner at a local restaurant in order to present the Capital Budget Campaign's objectives and to aid parishioners in determining the amount of their gift. The table below illustrates that a modest weekly or monthly contribution will accumulate to a substantial gift over three years:

Weekly	Monthly	Annually	3 Year Campaign
\$70.00	\$280.00	\$3,335.00	\$10,000.00
\$35.00	\$140.00	\$1,670.00	\$5,000.00
\$17.50	\$70.00	\$835.00	\$2,000.00
\$8.75	\$35.00	\$335.00	\$1,000.00

For many years, our parish attempted to strengthen its financial condition solely by reducing expenses. Although controlling costs was somewhat successful, the long-term trend towards greater and greater reliance on funds from our endowment to meet current operational expenses could not be reversed this way. To remedy this problem, the parish adopted a development plan by which membership will increase as will contributions. With your cooperation, this will insure a healthy and exciting future for S. Stephen's.



## LUNCHEON RESERVATIONS FOR THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

If you plan to attend the luncheon following the Solemn Mass for the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, on Saturday 9 June 2012, please make your reservation by contacting the parish office by phone at 421-6702, ext.1 (parish secretary Cory MacLean), or send email to: [office@sstephens.necoxmail.com](mailto:office@sstephens.necoxmail.com).

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLEAN-UP DAY

Sunday School classes at S. Stephen's are held on the third floor of the Guild house in three classrooms. Since few parishioners other than teachers, parents, and students have occasion to see these rooms, it may come as news that they are in sorry condition and urgently need a thorough cleaning out and tidying up, at the very least. In addition to stacks of lesson materials, papers, and projects going back decades, over the years these rooms have acquired filing cabinets and other items of furniture that need to be moved elsewhere; other items are frankly junk that needs to be thrown out; while still other items are capable of being rehabilitated and put to good classroom use. Before we can begin assessing work that may need to be done on the floors, walls, and ceilings, or decide on new items of furniture that need to be purchased, we need to clear away this accumulation of decades and reconfigure the rooms for optimal use with what's there.

On **Saturday 16 June** we will be having a Sunday School Clean-Up Day. Here is an opportunity for parishioners—especially those who have not been on the third floor—to come together in support of our young people to help begin creating a more appealing environment for their Christian education. So get your work clothes on, and join us after the 9:30 mass to help spruce up our Sunday School rooms so they will be in better shape for next year's program, and so that we can decide what other improvements are needed. We'll have coffee and bagels to start off the day. There's a lot to do, from cleaning to removing heavy furniture, so we can use all the help we can get. Thanks in advance for your help! For more information, contact Alison Huff at 401-274-7565; email: [alisonhuff@earthlink.net](mailto:alisonhuff@earthlink.net).



# Quodlibet

by James Busby

**quodlibet** (kwäd'lə bet') *n* [ME fr. ML quodlibetum, fr. L quodlibet, fr. *qui* who, what + *libet* it pleases, fr. *libere* to please] 1. a piece of music combining several different melodies, usually popular tunes, in counterpoint and often a light-hearted, humorous manner - *Merriam Webster*



The end of the choral season is upon us, with the Corpus Christi Mass being it. I'm already embroiled in my annual fit of lists and stacks of music, planning next season, grateful a next season is in sight, but looking forward to summer. I always liked that best!

A few milestones need mentioning. My, and our, heartiest congrats go to Molly Bledsoe, soprano, and Corey Mulvey, bass, who graduate this month: Molly from Brown, and Corey, majoring in voice, from RIC. Both have been devoted members of Schola. I've enjoyed watching them grow and am glad they plan to continue with us.

Soprano Jill Malin has spent a goodly part of this season with us and writes:

*I am thrilled to be singing with S. Stephen's and excited about my upcoming move to Cole Avenue with my husband Peter Malin. I have been an active soloist in the Boston area, singing with such ensembles as the Handel and Haydn Society, New York based Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Boston Cecilia, the Cantata Singers, the Dedham Choral Society, Wellesley Choral Society, the Publick Theatre, Emmanuel Music and King's Chapel. After bringing up two daughters in the sleepy suburb of Westwood, MA, my husband and I are both looking forward to biking down Blackstone Boulevard, baskets full from the farmers market. Singing here since November, I already feel warmly welcomed by the S. Stephen's community.*

Jill is a pleasure to be around and I'm so glad she's to be in our neighborhood.

Also new to us this year is tenor Brian Lopipero, who writes:

*I was born and raised outside of Syracuse, NY in a town called Camillus where I attended school at the West Genesee school district. It was the music department at West Genny that first inspired me to get into music. I began singing and playing the violin at the age of 8, and in fifth grade I made the decision to switch to the cello, which I've been playing ever since. In high school, I joined the West Genesee Wildcat Marching Band as a percussionist. After graduating high school, I attended the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) where I received my B.S. of Science in Packaging, class of 2010. During my time at RIT, I sang with the RIT singers, played cello in the RIT orchestra, and performed with Eight*

*Beat Measure (RIT original all male a cappella group). I live in Providence and work for Hasbro.*

Kudos to tenor Jason Connell, who just created the title role in Matthew Aucoin's new opera *Hart Crane* at Harvard's Loeb Drama Center. This is an arduous task, both musically and vocally, and Jason acquitted himself with the sort of singing and diction (and acting) we've come to expect from him. (The night I attended, Metropolitan Opera star Renée Fleming was in the audience looking glam as can be; she stayed to the end!).

A little about the music for Confraternity Mass, 9th June, contributed by Cory MacLean:



Publicity poster for 'Hart Crane', performed at The Loeb Drama Center, Harvard University

*On Saturday 9 June, the American Branch of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament will celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi (The Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ) here at S. Stephen's with Solemn High Mass. The music of the Mass will be Missa Pange Lingua of Josquin des Prez, a paraphrase Mass based on the plainchant hymn Pange Lingua gloriosi, written by Thomas Aquinas in the early 13<sup>th</sup> Century specifically for the Feast of Corpus Christi. We sing this beautiful hymn on Maundy Thursday during the procession to the altar of repose. The last and most well-known of Josquin's Mass settings, Missa Pange Lingua is an extended fantasia using an elaborated cantus firmus based on the Pange Lingua hymn.*

*The Schola will also sing of Peter Warlock, based on a middle-English carol written sometime during the early years of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Warlock wrote his haunting interpretation of this elegant allegory in 1919, as a commemoration of those who died during the First World War. A recording by the Schola can be found on our CD Stephen Full of Grace.*

The communion motet at the Mass will be that perfect little jewel written for the 1953 coronation of Elizabeth II, *O taste and see* by Vaughan Williams.

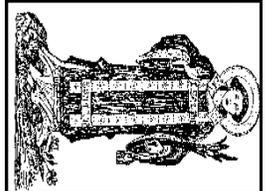
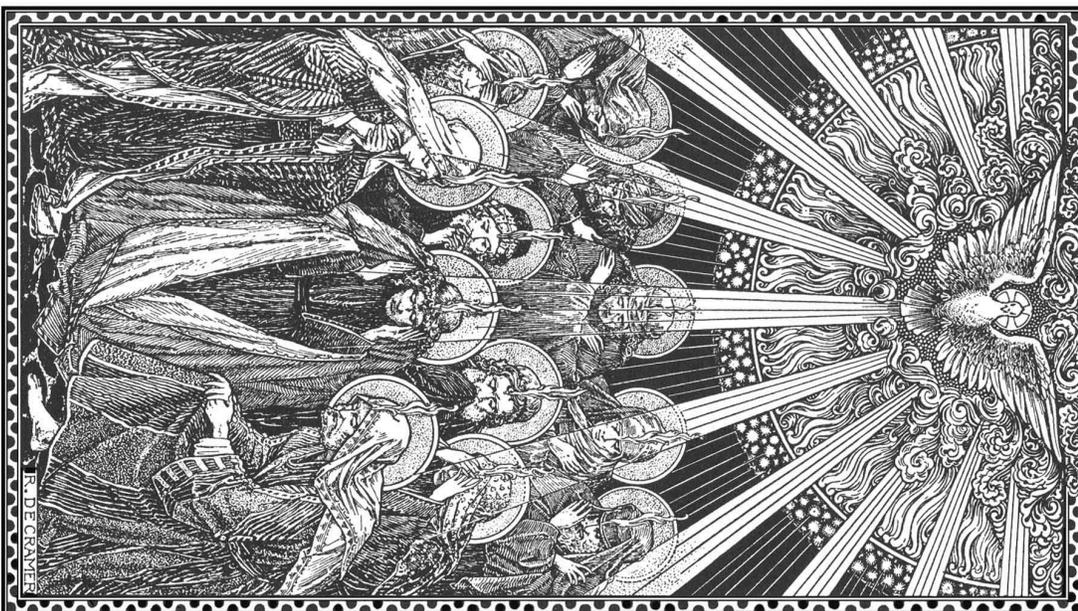
Hoping you have a refreshing and renewing summer.

—Truly, JCB



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# The S. Stephen

Pentecost 2012