



The S. Stephen

The monthly news at S. Stephen's Church in Providence

June, 2010

Vol. 9, No. 9

My dear people:

From the Rector



As I look back on the 2009-2010 program year that is now ending, there is much for which I am thankful. In addition to maintaining our usual high standards of liturgy and music, we have undertaken several bold new initiatives.

Since September, we have provided a home for the Epiphany Soup Kitchen (ESK) in the Great Hall on Saturday afternoons. I am especially appreciative of the efforts of those parishioners who also serve on the ESK Board—especially Bruce Lenihan and Ransom Widmer—and all those from S. Stephen's who volunteer to feed the hungry when it is the parish's turn in the ESK rotation. It is gratifying that the ESK operation is off to a good start and running smoothly at S. Stephen's.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the ordination of Fr. Michael G. Tuck to the sacred priesthood on Saturday 23 January followed by his first Mass the following day. Since their arrival last August, Fr. Tuck and his family have made an enormous contribution to the quality of our parish life. I am grateful to Fr. Tuck for his continuing assistance and support in so many ways—and not least for the new era of cooperation between the parish and the Episcopal Campus Ministry that his presence here represents.

Looking ahead, this summer I am planning on being away for a few weeks during which my family and I will be visiting relatives in England and Northern Ireland. As some of you know, I was born and spent the first five years of my life in Belfast; and it is now four years since I have paid a visit to my natal city—which used to be rather dull and dreary industrial town but more recently has grown into an exciting metropolitan center with lots of cultural activities and good restaurants. [One of the blessings of having a curate is also that I don't have to spend hours lining up supply clergy to take summer Sunday and weekday Masses, since Fr. Tuck and I can both stand in for each other during our respective vacations.]

As I write, the 2009-2010 choir season has come to an end with the Solemnity

of Corpus Christi on June 6. We will miss the *Schola Cantorum* during the coming three months. However, the simple but dignified liturgy of the summer, with its congregational Mass settings, affords us a slightly different perspective on worship that can help deepen our appreciation of its mystery. It always amuses me when visitors during the summer tell me at the door how much they love the high pomp and pageantry of our service—and how surprised they often are when I tell them that this is the simplified summer version.

In any case, we look forward to the resumption of choir season on Sunday 19 September 2010. As a late summer treat, however, the Schola will be returning for a Solemn High Mass on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which this year falls on a Sunday. Please make a note of the date and make an extra effort to come to this [as to all summer Sunday Masses when you are not away on vacation].

Some momentous milestones in our parish life are fast approaching. The 150th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of our current church building on George Street in 1860 will be Saint Matthew's Day, September 21. [The parish itself had been in existence since 1839 and worshiping in the building that is now the Barker Playhouse on Benefit Street.] This approaching anniversary can be seen as inaugurating a sesquicentennial season that will culminate two years later in the 150th anniversary of the dedication of our church building on February 27, 1862. Such anniversaries afford a unique opportunity to reflect on and celebrate our life, identity, and mission as a parish. Stay tuned for details on events and activities that will be planned to mark these milestones.

On a more personal note, the coming months also mark the tenth anniversary of my arrival as Rector of S. Stephen's. I celebrated my first Mass here on August 27, 2000—the Sunday before Labor Day—having arrived with the moving

van from Staten Island, New York, earlier in the week. My formal Institution as Rector by Bishop Wolf took place just over two months later, on Saturday 11 November 2000. I can honestly say that the past decade has been one of the happiest times of my life; and certainly the fulfillment of everything I ever hoped for when in 1989 I entered seminary and embarked upon the journey towards ordination to the priesthood. God willing, I hope to continue serving at S. Stephen's for many years to come.

Finally, this issue of *The S. Stephen* marks another milestone. Since 2001 Karen Vorbeck Williams has contributed her enormous creativity, talent, and long hours of hard work as the editor of this parish magazine. Several months ago, Karen discussed with me the possibility of stepping down from *The S. Stephen* to focus on other endeavors both in the parish and elsewhere; and we agreed that she would continue as editor through the June issue. [She will continue to maintain the parish website.] For the past nine years Karen's efforts have made *The S. Stephen* the outstanding publication that it is—one that continually draws compliments and praise from readers all over the country as well as ably serving the needs of our parish community. I want to take this opportunity to thank Karen publicly for all she has done. We will miss Karen as editor but will do our best to keep up the high standards she has set for us.

With all best wishes and prayers, I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest

Fr. John D. Alexander +

Fr. John D. Alexander

From the Curate

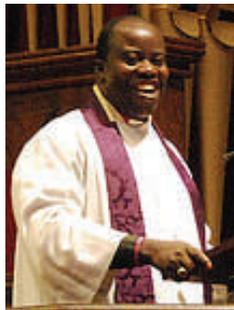
Dear People of S. Stephen's,



Now that Brown University's commencement weekend has come and gone, I am amazed that my first year in the Episcopal Campus Ministry has passed so quickly.

Last fall we were just beginning. I was meeting students, and we began saying Evening Prayer and having dinner together on Sunday evenings. Even though the group started small, our calendar quickly became quite full. Within the first few weeks of the fall semester, the parish was hosting our panel discussion on Columbus and Columbus Day. By engaging respectfully with such a sensitive topic, we were able to show the university community how the Gospel can be brought to bear on today's controversies.

This theme was taken up in the talk given by the Rt. Rev. John Zawo, bishop of our diocese's companion diocese of Ezo in the Sudan. Although we had little advance notice due to Bishop Zawo's difficulties obtaining a visa, we were still able to put together an excellent forum for Bp. Zawo's powerful message. We reached out to the International Relations and Africana Studies departments; and there was a strong delegation from the Darfur Action Network, a stu-



Bishop Zawo

dent activist group focusing on raising awareness on problems in the Sudan. And a report of the evening by our own Phoebe Pettingell was published in *The Living Church*.

As the Fall semester wound to a close, we made sure to enjoy our time together. A group of students read the lessons at the parish's Lessons and Carols service, and the following week, we went to the University's Lessons and Carols where three members of our group were singing with the Brown Chorus. Lastly, we finished out the semester with a slightly premature Christmas dinner at my house.

We kicked off the spring semester with a three week bible study course. We spent some time reading and reflecting on the Acts of the Apostles. We looked at how the figures of Peter and Paul change over the course of the text and what their examples might mean for us and for the contemporary Church. Also in the early spring, we joined a large group of students to hear theologian Miroslav Volf speak at Brown. Professor Volf spoke passionately about the role of grace in forgiveness and reconciliation. I know that this talk affected several of the students profoundly, and it was a terrific example of the kind of serious theological enquiry that the Episcopal Campus Ministry will be supporting in the years to come.

Much of the rest of the semester was taken up with the nuts and bolts of building and maintaining a Christian community – Lenten disciplines, a Quiet Day with the Harvard Episcopal Chaplaincy at the monastery of the Cowley Fathers, and the services of Holy Week and Easter. We ended the year with a barbecue at my house and the early morning service at S. Stephen's on Commencement Sunday at which I presented inscribed Prayer Books to the two seniors who were about to graduate.

Throughout all these events and all of the business, the thread which held the year together was our weekly gathering for Evening Prayer and dinner on Sundays. Over the course of the year, we began to create a real community of prayer. Some of the students were attend-

ing services here at S. Stephen's in the morning, while others were going to other Episcopal parishes. But they all came together in the evening to pray the psalms and read the scriptures. And, after the service, we would meet for dinner and sharing our experiences. It was especially touching to watch the sophomores and upperclassmen help guide the freshmen over the course of the year. Together with our two student coordinators, we have already begun the process of planning for the upcoming fall semester. We have a bible study planned – I think we'll be reading the Gospel of Mark – and a few other events to get things started. If this last year is any indication, we'll have another fantastic year.

On behalf of the students whose lives you have already touched, please let me say a word of thanks to the whole parish of S. Stephen's, and also to Fr. Alexander, for your support, hospitality, and most especially, for your prayers.

EPIPHANY SOUP KITCHEN

"He hath filled the hungry with good things..."



S. Stephen's is one of several parishes around the Diocese who volunteer at the Epiphany Soup Kitchen, now conveniently located right here in our Great Hall! Our parish's remaining scheduled 2010 volunteer Saturdays are:

**July 31, August 21,
October 16, December 4**

If you can help, please contact Bruce Lennihan or Ransom Widmer. Extra hands are always welcome. If you can't serve on one of S. Stephen's scheduled dates, you are still welcome to come when you can.

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? - *Isaiah 58:7*

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Contributors: Phoebe Pettingell, Cory MacLean, The Rev'd Michael G. Tuck and the Rector. **Deadline for submissions:** the 5th of the month.

Picturing the Holy Trinity

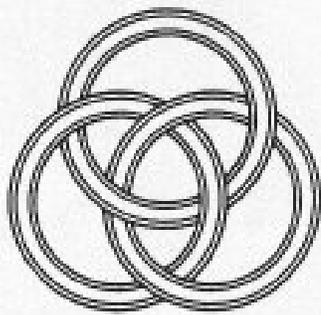
by Phoebe Pettingell

The Holy Trinity is central to any orthodox understanding of Christianity. It is also one of the hardest mysteries of our Faith to comprehend; and the history of Christian doctrine records one heresy after another based on misunderstandings of its reality. A central issue in the schism between the Western and Eastern Churches since 1054 has been the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed: whether the Spirit “proceedeth from the Father and the Son,” as we aver each Sunday, or only from the Father [as the Orthodox claim].

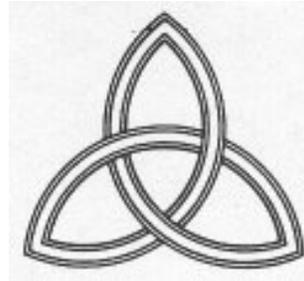
The New Testament never uses the word “Trinity,” yet contains many references to the three Persons. Matthew’s Gospel records Jesus’ last words to the Apostles: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you.” [Matthew 28:18-20]. Paul ends his Second Letter to the Corinthians, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” [2 Corinthians 13:14]. As the Church reflected systematically on the implications of these scriptural references in the early centuries of its life, it eventually formulated such statements as the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, found beginning on page 864 of *The Book of Common Prayer, 1979*, which proclaims that “the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.” In other words, the Father is neither the Son nor the Spirit, yet they remain of one divine substance, “and in this Trinity none is afore, or after other, none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three Persons are co-eternal, consubstantial, and co-equal.”

Many people understand better when they can picture something that represents an abstract idea visually. Over the centuries, the Christian tradition has devised various symbols to try to illustrate “the Three in One and One in Three.” The earliest known representation of the Trinity is the equilateral triangle sometimes containing a circle which represents eternity, since it has no beginning or end. In the fourth century, Saint Augustine of Hippo explained that three interlocking gold rings were separate entities, yet of one substance. Always fascinated by

the science of his times, his illustration referred to what mathematicians call “Borromean rings”—three topological circles, attached to form a “Brunnian link” so that to remove any ring detaches the other two. The legend that St. Patrick used a shamrock to illustrate the Trinity dates to the eighteenth century, almost 1300 years after he lived.



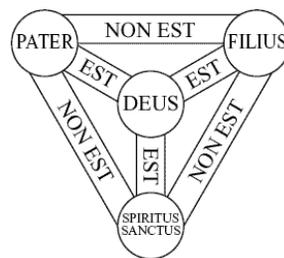
Borromean Rings



Triquetra

the Trinity. The triangle linking the outer circles bears the Latin words *non est*—“is not”. The Father *is not* the Son; the Son *is not* the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit *is not* the Father. Yet the inner lines connecting the circles representing the Three Persons to the circle marked “God” say *est*, or “is,” meaning that each of the three Persons *is* God.

But symbols are not “Persons” and can be quite impersonal. Jesus can be represented as the Lamb of God, but throughout much of Christian history, he has more often been depicted as a man to remind us that,



Scutum Fidei

by the Incarnation, he became fully human. Of course, the pre-incarnate divine Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity, cannot be portrayed in the same fashion. The Holy Spirit can only be represented symbolically, since he has no incarnate form. But the First Person, the Father, presents a more complex dilemma. Early Christianity followed Judaism’s prohibition of depicting God. In Exodus 33:20, the Deity tells Moses, “You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.” At first, following a synagogue tradition, Christian artists portrayed the Father as a hand outstretched from heaven, sending the Holy Spirit to Mary so that she could conceive the Son, or blessing Christ’s baptism in the Jordan river. John’s Gospel declares, however, “No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.” [John 1:18]. Accordingly, by the fourth century, theologians and artists in the West considered that, since the Trinity is consubstantial, Christ could stand in for the Father in visual portrayals of such scenes as the creation of the earth, because “He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth,

The Trefoil, shaped like a shamrock, and the triquetra are other symbols for the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Finally, there is the *Scutum Fidei*, the “Shield of Faith,” in which three circles are connected by a triangle, while each circle is also connected to an inner circle. The inside one represents God, while the three outer ones represent the Three Persons of



Trefoil

visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities -- all things were created through him and for him." [Colossians, 1:15-16]. Other representations of the Trinity sometimes portrayed three identical figures—a point to which we shall return presently. More commonly, however, the Holy Spirit was represented by a dove, as at the Baptism of Christ, or by tongues of fire, as at Pentecost.

During what was known as the period of *Iconoclasm* ["icon-smashing"] at the beginning of the eighth century, images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints were forbidden in the Eastern Church. The Seventh Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 787 condemned the Iconoclastic heresy and restored the use of religious images to the Church's worship. However, God the Father remained a forbidden subject for art, and the foremost theologian of the time, John of Damascus, warned: "Who can make a similitude of the invisible, incorporeal, uncircumscribed and undepictable God? It is then the uttermost insanity and impiety to give a form to the Godhead." This same Council of Nicaea made two other affirmations vital to the understanding of images. Firstly, it distinguished between the worship due to God alone and the veneration that could be paid to saints who, nevertheless, remain humans like ourselves, yet in a state of grace. Secondly, it affirmed that worship of Christ and veneration of saints "passed through" the icons to their heavenly prototypes, so that the works of art were not themselves the objects of devotion.

Meanwhile, in the West, the tradition of portraying the Father with Christ's features persisted. A twelfth century carving of the Trinity from the basilica of St. Denis in Paris shows the Holy Spirit as a dove, hovering over the First Person holding the Second Person as a Lamb in his arms. A tenth century image portrays the face of the Father (again, resembling Jesus), but no other part of him. A weird, late medieval painting from Perugia shows God with three identical faces peering out of a single head. Yet even when portraying the Last Judgment, it is Christ who is depicted throned in majesty. The Father is absent from the scene.

Throughout the Middle Ages, artistic representations were considered a teaching tool to help the faithful understand Bible stories and theological doctrines. Their ultimate message was to convey the

Word of God and the doctrine of the Church. Though much medieval art is beautiful, its purpose surpasses mere aesthetic pleasure. But by the early Renaissance, religious subjects increasingly became an opportunity for the particular artist more to demonstrate his skill and personal vision, than to represent a common ecclesial understanding. Conventions also changed at this time. The Father was often shown as an older man with a long beard, richly robed and wearing the papal tiara. The Trinity cross hanging in our Lady Chapel is modeled on these depictions. The Son appears as the crucified One—sometimes suffering and

humiliated, sometimes vested as a priest and crowned as a king (*Christus Rex*), while the Dove hovers above or below, forming a triangle—or else spreading its wings across the closure on the Father's cope. The Father's aged appearance was intended to represent the Ancient of Days from the Book of Daniel. This kind of representation is, of course, symbolic. Because of the existence of certain medieval and Reformation era heresies about the Trinity, this kind of depiction came to be used to try and help people envision the three Persons. As C. S. Lewis observes, when we are told that God has no form, unconsciously we may imagine him as something like divine tapioca, filling the universe.

However, by the sixteenth century, the papal regalia in depictions of God the Father gave way to a more humanistic vision. In painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo imagines the Father very much as a glorified human being. This created both theological and psychological dangers. Take the "Ancient of Days."

While the post-medieval West has been inclined to use this image to represent the First Person, the Orthodox have always maintained it to be the Second Person before his Incarnation as Jesus. And even if we do not interpret the Second Commandment's prohibition against graven images and likenesses as a ban on all art—after all, it goes on to enjoin us not to "worship" them, implying that the intent is to avoid idolatry—it nevertheless supports the notion that the Divine Being can only be portrayed in his Incarnate form on earth, because "No one has ever seen" the Father. The Eastern Church became convinced that its counterpart in the West was dragging the Godhead down to our own level. While the Dove is obviously a symbol, not a likeness of the Spirit, how are we to interpret pictures of the First Person: as symbolic or as artistic representations like those of Jesus? For the Orthodox, the principles of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of Nicaea were being blurred, not only in depicting the Father who cannot be seen, but in trying to represent the divine as a kind of glorified humanity, rather than an iconic conduit to something beyond human representation.

From the psychological perspective, an elderly God may seem less potent. Mark Twain's mocking description of "an old man with a long beard in a white nightgown" conjures up notions of powerlessness, even senility. No matter how vigorous the Father of the Sistine Chapel may appear, he tempts us to interpret the Divine in human terms. Studying the arguments for "inclusive language" for God over several decades, I have become increasingly convinced that the feminist objection to God the Father often stems from the papal or elderly male figure in art, more than from Biblical language—either as the



Woodcut by Albrecht Dürer, 1511



Basilica of Saint-Denis, Paris, Twelfth Century



Fresco by Luca Rossetti da Orta, 1738-9

domineering patriarch, or as a figure of male detachment inhibiting feminine empowerment.

A sounder way of interpreting the Holy Trinity was devised by the Orthodox in the icon known as “The Hospitality of Abraham.” This illustrates a scene in Genesis 18:1-15, in which the patriarch is visited by the Lord at the oaks of Mamre. *“He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men stood in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, and said, ‘My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.’”* Abraham and Sarah wash the travelers’ feet and serve them a meal. In turn, they tell the couple that in their old age they will conceive the child they have longed for. Scripture identifies the visitors as “the Lord,” yet specifies he appears in the form of three beings—Christians have long interpreted them as angelic representations of God the Trinity. The Orthodox icons show three winged figures seated around a table, usually being waited on by Abraham and Sarah. Yet at the beginning of the fifteenth century the greatest of all Russian iconographers, Andrei Rublev, portrayed only the heavenly visitors. They are not intended to be a “portrait,” or even an exact representation of what Abraham saw, but in the placement of the figures—their symmetry, balance, and mutuality—constitutes a visual image of the dynamic relationship among three co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial Persons. This icon invites us to contemplate a God who is “the Love that moves the sun and other stars,” creating all things, yet always infinitely more than creation itself.



Icon by Andrei Rublev, c. 1400

Processions and Christian Bears: Corpus Christi at St. John’s, Newport

On Thursday 3 June, ten members of S. Stephen’s traveled to our sister Anglo-Catholic parish, St. John’s, Newport, to join with them and others in the diocese in the celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi. A glorious Mass was followed by the traditional Procession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The Rector of St. John’s, Fr. Trent Fraser was the celebrant; Fr. Barry Swain—well-known to our parish from his visits here, once in his capacity as the Superior of the Guild of All Souls—served as deacon of the Mass and preached. His memorable sermon began with his holding up a DVD of the movie, “Pride and Prejudice,” which looks like nothing more than a plastic disc, yet if properly read, recreates all the drama, characters and Regency setting of Austen’s novel. For most of us, the working of a DVD is a mystery, yet we know it does work, and appreciate the world opened up by what we view on our screens. So our blessed Lord comes to us in the mystery of another flat round disc—the Sacred Host—and as believers we know He is present in our midst as he was present to his disciples during the 33 years of his earthly life, and he promises us that if we follow him we too shall be raised from the dead to live with him in eternity.

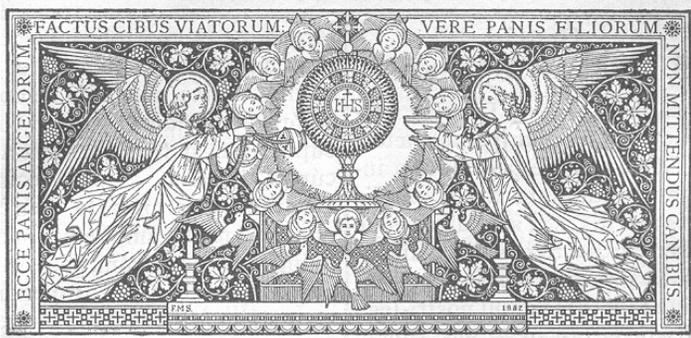
Fr. Swain also told a striking story about an atheist hunter who has spent his life defaming Christianity and the Church. One day, in the woods, he comes unprepared upon a large, fierce, bear. His atheism deserts him and he desperately promises God that if he will rescue him from this seemingly hopeless situation, he will become a Christian. When God replies that it seems unlikely that the hunter will follow through on such a promise, the hunter then asks God to make *the bear* a Christian. With that, the bear rears up on his hind legs, crosses himself with his paw, and murmurs in a low growl, “For what I am about to receive, may the Lord make me truly thankful.”

Frs. Alexander and Tuck were invited by Fr. Fraser to vest and sit in choir during the Mass and then take part in the Procession, where our rector carried the *ombrellino* over the monstrance. After Benediction, we all adjourned to St. John’s parish hall for a delicious dinner and merry fellowship. It is always a joy to share feasts of the Church with our fellow parishes, and especially with those Anglo Catholic congregations whose worship and beliefs are most akin to ours. Our fellowship sustains and enriches one another and we are indeed blessed by God to have St. John’s so close by.

[Note: Corpus Christi is the Feast particularly associated with The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. See elsewhere in this issue to read about our new Ward.]



CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



A Ward of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (CBS) is now being re-established at S. Stephen's. Along with the Society of Mary and the Guild of All Souls, the Confraternity is one of the principal Anglo-Catholic devotional societies that came into being in the nineteenth century to promote sound teaching and to re-emphasize neglected spiritual practices.

The oldest Anglo-Catholic devotional society, the Confraternity was first established in England in 1862. An independent American branch was established in New York in 1867.

The purposes of the Confraternity include honoring the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, celebrating the Eucharist each Sunday as the principal service, and restoring the ancient practice of fasting before receiving Holy Communion. The CBS also encourages the regular use of private confession as a means of preparing to receive Holy Communion, in addition to the general confession said at each Mass.

Associates are asked to promote reverence for the Real Presence both by the example of their lives and by prayer, to prepare fully for reception of Holy Communion and to give thanks afterward, to pray for other associates and others receiving Holy Communion, to practice fasting, and to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.

While some of the historic aims of the CBS have been realized, in other areas its witness is needed now more than ever. On one hand, the rubrics of the 1979 Prayer Book do specify the Holy Eucharist [rather than Morning Prayer] as the principal service of the Church on Sundays and major Holy Days; and one now finds the Eucharist so celebrated at most Episcopal parishes across the country, whether high, low, or in-between.

On the other hand, this increased frequency of celebration is often accompanied by a marked laxity in preparation and a lack of care and reverence in the celebration itself. Some parishes, for example, use homemade altar breads which leave crumbs of our Lord's Body scattered all over the altar, sanctuary, aisles, and pews—hardly an appropriate expression of reverence for Our Lord's Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament. In other parishes, even the unbaptized are encouraged to receive Communion—in violation not only of the Episcopal Church's canon law but also of the normative theology and practice of the Catholic tradition itself.

At S. Stephen's, devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is integral to our life together as a parish. We offer Mass daily, allowing for frequent reception of Holy Communion. And our

schedule affords regular opportunities to adore Christ in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood at such times as the Maundy Thursday Vigil before the Altar of Repose, the Procession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on the Sunday after Corpus Christi, and periodically scheduled periods of Eucharistic Exposition, Adoration, and Benediction at various times during the year.

It is thus highly appropriate that at S. Stephen's a Ward of the Confraternity should encourage our participation in and appreciation of this crucial aspect of our parish's life and worship. In fact, years ago a Ward did exist at S. Stephen's; and the process of reconstituting it is now under way. Several parishioners have become Associates. Our plan is to meet quarterly—on the first Saturday or thereabouts of every third month—for Morning Prayer, Mass, appropriate devotions, and breakfast, in rotation with the other devotional societies in the parish. The next meeting of the CBS is planned for Saturday 11 September.

For more information, contact Fr. Alexander or the ward secretary, Rhoda Steinhart, at 401.954.6010 or rhodasteinhart@cox.net. The website of the American branch of the Confraternity may be viewed at <http://home.sandiego.edu/~babber/CBS/>.

Editor's Farewell

by Karen Vorbeck Williams

After nine years at the helm of *The S. Stephen* it's time for me to move on. Life circumstances have changed and a number of exciting possibilities for personal projects and travel have captured my imagination. I also look forward to finding opportunities to serve the church in new ways.

I shall miss working with Father Alexander and all our gifted writers, but hope to continue my contribution to *The S. Stephen* as a writer when I can. Over these many years our parish newsletter has been a kind of school for me. I've learned about everything from how to zap text around in Microsoft Publisher to a better command of the English language. I've enjoyed working with a Rector who really cares about the product and the process and have come to marvel at how much he knows about how to rescue a writer and an editor. I've learned something about work as an offering and about the faith in both understanding and practice. I shall treasure always the things I've learned and the people who taught me.

For me, editing *The S. Stephen's* was challenging and fun. I found joy especially in the friendships formed with Father Alexander and our writers. My thanks goes out especially to Cory MacLean who was/is "the editor's" editor and just possibly the kindest person I've ever known. *The S. Stephen* has cultivated a group of gifted writers dedicated to writing about the faith and readers, far and near, who want to know more and wait eagerly for the next issue. I am surprised and pleased to have been part of that.



In the Garden

by Cory MacLean

When George and I arrived as co-sextons in February of 1999, the Guild House garden didn't exist. The mountain laurels, the boxwood hedge, a single rose bush and the white dogwood encircled a depressing sinkhole haphazardly lined with a few stones, which every spring sprouted a few sad looking irises and a hyacinth or two. For the last eleven years, I have been grateful to be able to make the garden what it is today - with the help of several people - not the least of whom is departing editor Karen Vorbeck. She and her late husband Allen were part of a hardy team of parishioners (including Julia Steiny and Simon Newby—forgive me if I've forgotten anyone) who pulled out the yew bush near the front door several years ago (no small undertaking), creating a generous space for new things to grow.

My sister Lissa donated seven rose bushes from her Boxford, Massachusetts garden, including the twenty year old pink climber that adorns the office windows. Parishioners Julia Steiny, Rollin Bartlett, and John Chamberlin have contributed roses, oregano, and fringed bleeding heart.

Brown's Urban Environmental Garden contributed the mint which grows *everywhere*, and the cluster of lilies of the valley in the southwest corner were nicked from an undisclosed wooded location adjoining a local graveyard.



Bobby Rose donated the lovely statue of Mary, currently secluded under arching roses. She is most readily seen in the off season, when her gentle face reminds me of those very flowers that wait for warmer days to bloom.

Late parishioner Lou Pacifico, who died a few years ago, used to water the garden when I was away, and there's a beautiful salmon colored rose hidden near the back that I always think of as "Lou's Rose". It has been growing there for decades, and Lou told me that even long before we came, he would water and tend it on his own.

A few times a year the chef from Brown's refectory across the street will send his minions to pick fresh mint from the garden, and hours later a white box always arrives, laden with fresh scones, pastries, and other treats as a gesture of thanks.

College students come and sit in the garden, take pictures, or catch me when I'm outside to say they love walking by. Locals, professors, the folks who come to Al-Anon, even parents coming to deliver their ballerinas to the Great Hall, almost always have something nice to say.

Our Guild House garden is an oasis in a desert of streets and buildings, noise and traffic. I feel like it's an extension of our desire to welcome people into our midst. I am so blessed and grateful to have been able to work in it for all these years.

Commune Sanctorum

JUNE

- 1 Justin, Martyr at Rome, c. 167
- 2 *Blandina and her Companions, the Martyrs of Lyons, 177*
- 3 The Martyrs of Uganda, 1885-1887
- 5 Boniface, Archbishop of Mainz, Missionary, Martyr, 754
- 6 *Norbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg, 1134*
Philip the Evangelist, Deacon, 1st century
- 8 *William, Archbishop of York, 1154*
- 9 *Columba, Abbot of Iona, 597*
- 10 *Ephrem of Edessa, Deacon, 373*
- 11 SAINT BARNABAS THE APOSTLE
- 13 *Anthony of Padua, Priest & Doctor, 1231*
- 14 Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea, 379
- 15 *Evelyn Underhill, Spiritual Writer, 1941*
- 16 *Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, 1752*
- 18 *Bernard Mizeki, Catechist and Martyr in Rhodesia, 1896*
- 21 *Aloysius Gonzaga, Jesuit, 1591*
- 22 *Alban, First Martyr in Britain, c. 304*
Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, 431;
Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Martyrs, 1535
(or July 6)
- 23 *Etheldreda, Abbess of Ely, c. 678*
- 24 THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST
- 27 *Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, 444*
- 28 Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, c. 202
- 29 SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL, APOSTLES
- 30 *First Martyrs of the Church of Rome, 1st century*

JULY

- 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
- Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, 1336*
- 6 *Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Martyrs, 1535*
(or June 22)
Sexburga, Abbess of Ely, 699
- 7 *Palladius, Apostle of Ireland, 5th century*
- 8 *Aquila and Priscilla, Companions of Saint Paul, 1st century*
- 11 Benedict of Nursia, Abbot, Father of Western Monasticism, Patron of Europe, c. 550
- 13 *Silas, Companion of Saint Paul, 1st century*
- 15 *Bonaventure, Friar, Bishop, Teacher, 1274*
Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, c. 862
Vladimir of Kiev, first Christian ruler in Russia, 1015
- 16 *Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury, 1099*
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 18 *Elizabeth Ferrard, Founder of the Community of Saint Andrew, 1883*
- 19 *Macrina, Deaconess, Teacher, c. 379*
- 20 *Margaret of Antioch, Martyr, 4th century*
Bartolomé de las Casas, Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico, 1566
- 22 SAINT MARY MAGDALENE
- 23 *Bridget of Sweden, Abbess, Patron of Europe, 1373*
- 24 *Thomas à Kempis, Priest, 1471*
- 25 SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE
- 26 Anne and Joachim, Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 28 *Samson of Dol, Bishop, Abbot, 565*
- 29 Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany
- 30 *William Wilberforce, Social Reformer, 1833*
- 31 Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Society of Jesus, 1556

Bold Capitals—Principal Feasts, Capitals—Major Feasts
Lowercase—Commemorations, Italics—Optional Commemorations



Address Correction Requested

S. Stephen's Church in Providence
114 George Street
Providence, RI 02906



Assumption
of the
Blessed Virgin Mary

Solemn Mass

Sunday
15 August 2010
10 am

*Missa Assumpta est Maria à 6
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*