



The Shepherd's Staff

**Newsletter of the
Diocese of the Western States**

September 2020

The Right Reverend Donald M. Ashman

bishopashman@gmail.com

provostsjact@gmail.com

A STATEMENT ON RACISM FROM THE APCK COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

One of the prerogatives of the Archbishop is to speak God's word to the Province and to speak for the Province to the world. As the subject of societal racism is topical, and passions run so high, we need to state our church's position on the subject of racial strife and discrimination. Therefore, with the full consent and support of the members, we, the Council of Bishops of the Anglican Province of Christ the King wish to make the following statement.

The Bishops of the Anglican Province of Christ the King hereby denounce, condemn, and rebuke racism in any way, shape, form or fashion in which it may present itself in our society. Furthermore, we anathematize and censure any person who practices racism or who denigrates or maligns any persons in any way because of their racial or ethnic heritage. Racism simply has no place among us!

These practices and beliefs are in direct conflict with the Judeo-Christian ethic given us as Christians by Our Lord Jesus Christ in His new Commandment to love one another as found in St. John 13:34-35 – "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

The Love which God has for us and the Love by which we are to Love God and neighbor is summed up in St. Matthew 7:12, part of the Sermon on the Mount. It is the Golden Rule ~ Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. We are reminded of this every Sunday in the Summary of the Law. This is, without a doubt, how we should live, move, and have our being in the world: Love God and love our neighbors (everyone) as ourselves, even if they treat us badly.

Therefore, the Council of Bishops exhorts all members of the Province to take these words and the teachings of Our Lord to heart and practice them in your daily lives. After the senseless murders of George Floyd, Cannon Hinnant, and others, accompanied by the civil unrest that has swept our nation; concurrent with a pandemic that has changed our very way of life, all of us need to stand up and model to our friends and neighbors; to the city and to the world how to live, behave, and reflect the Love of God to each other, instead of being pawns for Evil to use to foment chaos, disorder, confusion, and bedlam throughout society. It is a matter of personal sacrifice and personal sanctity. We are called to this way of Life and Love as Christians so we may overcome all forms of Evil with God's Love.

To continue us on our pilgrimage to God in these catastrophic times, I call on each member of the Province to deny and overcome every temptation to hate or resent and transform it into opportunities to love our neighbors as ourselves by the power of the Holy Ghost dwelling within you, as God loves each one of us and, further, to make the following Prayer for Social Justice, from our Book of Common Prayer, part of your daily devotion:

ALMIGHTY God, who hast created man in thine own image; Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil, and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice among men and nations, to the glory of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**For the Love of God and the Sake of the Gospel, I remain,
+ The Most Rev. Dr. John E. Upham, Jr.**

Archbishop, Anglican Province of Christ the King, For the Council of Bishops

An Excerpt from a Sermon by Robert Sherwood Morse on Christ and Culture

“We are called to personal sanctity. In our pilgrimage into God with God, God is the most wonderful person in this universe. He told us that if we loved Him, we would keep His commandments. The saints are those remarkable beings who have done this; loved God and all that He created, loved one another, their families, parents, children, friends, and even more remarkable, loved their enemies. We should. . .find our common mutuality in Christ. God does not separate us according to age, race, class, or gender. There is only Christ and His saints. We are called to be part of that great company of light.”

2021 Ordo Kalendars

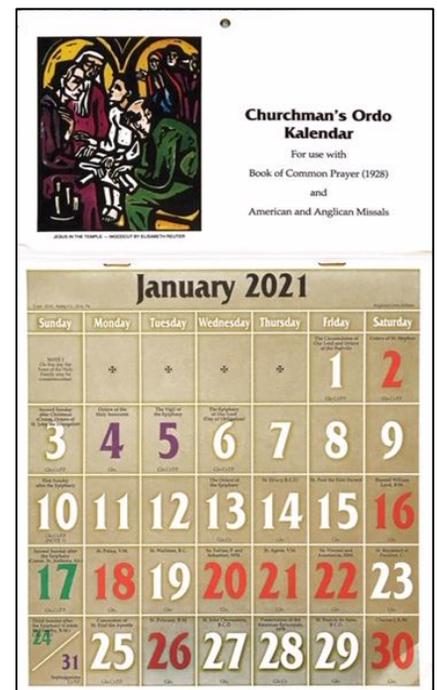
The 2021 Ordo Kalendars have been prepared, printed and are available for immediate purchase. The Ordo Kalendar which conforms to the 1928 Prayer Book and both the American and Anglican Missals. The Ordo Kalendar is in full color and edited for Church use by Father Matthew Weber of Saint Ann’s Chapel in Palo Alto. There is space on the front of the Kalendar where a parish may, if desired, insert a picture, its name and other pertinent information after receiving the Kalendars. Direct inquiries to Mrs. Nona Gourley (209) 862-2582 or email: order1928bcpcalendar@gmail.com.

In and Around the Diocese

Our sick are all improving and making great strides towards improved health including Belinda McNeely (home and gaining strength), Father Ponec (home and on the mend), Father Boyd Britton and Father David La Barbara. Deacon Mike Ruffino is in Physical Therapy but continued prayers are needed for the slow recovery of his wife, Susan.

Saint Joseph’s Seminary Fall classes are getting underway. Bishop Hansen’s history class began on Tuesday, August 24th and will continue until December. Bishop Ashman’s Greek III-IV class resumed on Friday, August 28th and will continue until next Summer. Canon Ben Jones’ Spiritual Discernment class will begin in a few weeks. Plans are also underway for next semester including a Deacon’s Practicum taught by Bishop Ashman.

Please pray for Peter our Suffragan Bishop along with the priests and deacons of our Diocese. They are under great stress and they need your support. Pray for those who despair and struggle to find the gifts of Faith, Hope and Charity in these troubled times. Pray for each other. Pray for the Church, the unity of God’s People, Peace, Social Justice, those who seek Holy Orders, those who have died in the service of our Country, along with the sick (especially those struck down with COVID19), the suffering, the friendless, and the needy.



A Sermon Concerning our Current Challenges

[By Father Michael Mautner]

Independence Day is always a good time to reflect on our country's present challenges in light of the Gospel. This year it was especially so. On Memorial Day, four Minneapolis police officers, sworn to serve and protect all in that great city, committed a homicide. Technology let the whole world witness Mr. George Floyd's death practically in real time. Recent similar incidents have given a context to this horror that some may find hard to face. No matter. As Americans, we must all face it. Together.

Working through the many issues in our communities that involve race and policing will not be easy, but civic engagement is one of the hallmarks of Anglicanism. We are patriots. Duty, honor, and love of God and country ought to lead us now toward principled, biblically based reflection about these matters.

In personal conversations with our Black brothers and sisters in Christ, we will learn that our experiences, and hence our perspectives, often differ. That's okay. That's why we need to have those conversations. Reasonable Christian minds may disagree about approaches and policies, emphases and means. The end of our civic engagement on these issues, though, its aim, must be Christ-centered and grounded in His Word.

Galatians 3:28-29 is especially relevant: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." These words of the Blessed Apostle Paul have always been in our Bibles. Their present import, however, many in the Church have too often ignored. Our Unity in Christ is a sham, a lie, if it exists only in church and for just an hour a week. We have to bring it home with us. We are commanded to live it. Always and everywhere.

"In Christ there is no East or West," (1940 Hymnal #263). Neither is there Black or White. Or, at least, there shouldn't be. There's not supposed to be. God created only one "race," the Human Race, and it was for all of us that Christ our Savior gave His life upon the Cross. It was "for the sins of the whole world" that He died and rose again. That means every single human being. The Church hasn't said so often enough or loudly enough. We need to change that.

Of course, Equality doesn't mean we're identical. Historical experience matters to who we are in the present. That's why "remembrance" is such a key Christian concept, and such a vital part of our sacrament. We remember the night in which He was betrayed. We remember that he said, "What you do to the least of these, you have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40.

We need also to remember that the African American historical experience has been unique among "the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues," as the Prayerbook describes the American tapestry (BCP 1928, page 36: For Our Country). That experience matters today and it matters for what we do in our country going forward.

Growing up Jewish, certain sets of words from American history were very meaningful to me as a member of a minority group. Here's one, a quote from a letter George Washington wrote to the Newport, Rhode Island Synagogue, August 18, 1790: "For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support."

For all the greatness of these words, President Washington failed to live them out fully on his own Virginia plantation during his lifetime. Today, every American lives with the legacy of that lost opportunity. Acknowledging this denigrates the Founders' not at all. Theirs were great Christian minds, but they left us a Republic, as Benjamin Franklin said, "If you can keep it." It's not on them anymore. It's on us. Keeping our Republic now means living out the full Christian meaning of America's creed as the Founders in their generation did not and, perhaps, could not.

In pursuit of this, let's take two additional scriptures more seriously in our daily lives and relationships. Leviticus 25:10: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and unto all the inhabitants thereof!" We know this one. It's on the Liberty Bell.

Deuteronomy 16:18–20, we should know, but maybe don't, at least not as well as we should: "Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may thrive and occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you."

Without Justice for all, there is no Liberty. Not really. We cannot proclaim liberty for all while being silent to injustice in our midst. Justice for some isn't good enough. Many isn't good enough. Even most, while getting there, shouldn't be good enough. Not for us. Not for the Body of Christ living in the world, and not for us as Americans.

It's got to be all: "With Liberty and Justice for all." That has a familiar ring to it, doesn't it? Let's each of us do all that we can – as churchmen and as citizens - to make it a living reality. Now.

Yours in Christ Jesus, Our Lord, M+

The Last Word

Our Western world is moving steadily into the darkness of denial. It conveniently embraces the absence of moral values in atheism and substitutes relativism for thought. The materialism of the West hides from the truth. It ends in separation and emptiness. The American soul is caught in despair. We try to remain individuals amidst the growing collectivization of life. No one can withstand this tension without a purpose in life. Agnostic materialists, in their denial of religious tradition, flounder between meditation and melancholy.

In contrast, Aristotle observed that with truth all things sing together. We turn a blind eye to the unseen reality of eternity that lies so close. Where do all the denials, the negative attacks of the media, the loss of faith, eventually end? They end not in Heaven. They end in nothingness. But the twinkling votive lights of prayer burn on into history before the humble Virgin Mother who holds out to us in her hands God Incarnate. The Faith given to the Apostles and saints remains unchanged. The Resurrection and Ascension reassure us that love is the source of courage and sacrifice.

Our Lord said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Nothing changes the nature of God. We are surrounded by the personal tragedy of those who have erased from their memory the three cardinal virtues: faith, hope, charity. They have lost awareness of the unseen encircling saints and have become cold and indifferent to the burning heart of incarnate love. God is the purpose of life to believers. There is a unity, not always understood, but accepted by faith. Without God mankind cannot survive as individuals. We are caught in a struggle between the collective and the individual, as seen in the segregation of generations and age groups.

Many clergy don't believe the Creeds but consider them myths, not history. They claim that Our Lord was not born of a virgin, did not literally rise from the dead, and did not ascend, because Heaven is merely an idea not a place. Father Raynes, Superior of the Community of the Resurrection in England and a great saint, when asked about Hell said: "People make hell for themselves and will not get out. I think this is observable." When asked who were the people most in danger of Hell, he said, "I think the indifferent," and then added, "and priests."

We are called to personal sanctity. In our pilgrimage into God with God, God is the most wonderful person in this universe. He told us that if we loved Him we would keep his commandments. The saints are those remarkable beings who have done this, loved God and all that He created, loved one another, their families, parents, children, friends, and even more remarkable, loved their enemies. We should not collectivize into age groups but find our common mutuality in Christ. God does not separate us according to age, race, class, or gender. There is only Christ and His saints. We are called to be part of that great company of light.

+Robert Sherwood Morse, *Church and Culture*