



The Shepherd's Staff

*Newsletter of the
Diocese of the Western States*

October 2020

The Right Reverend Donald M. Ashman

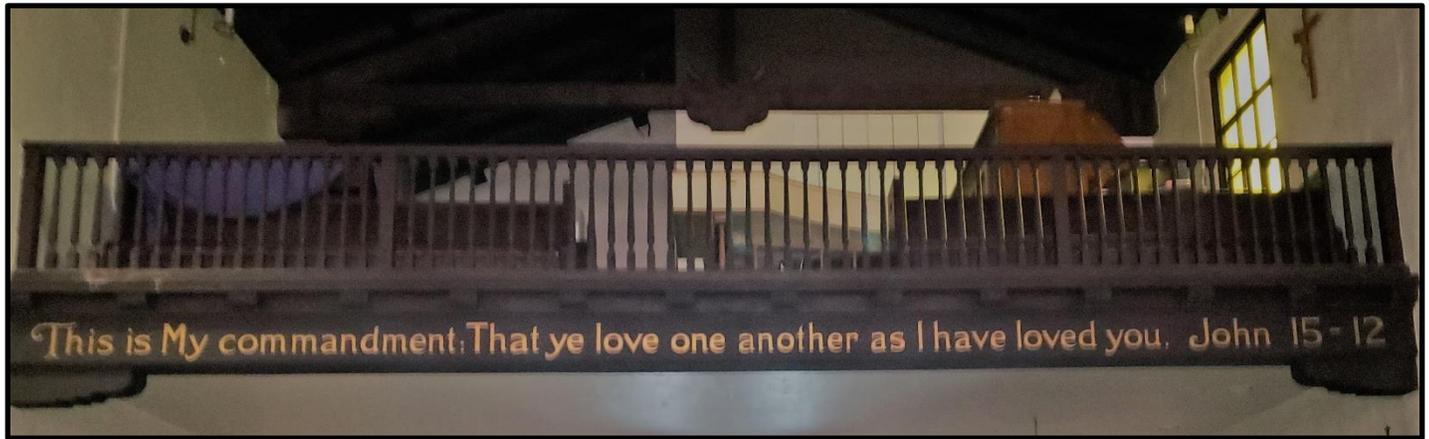
bishopashman@gmail.com

In the Service of Holy Matrimony, the bride and the groom are told that their union is like the union that is betwixt Christ and His Church. Under the Choir loft of Church of Our Saviour in Los Angeles, are found the words for all to see as they leave the Church, ***"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."*** If a husband and wife rule their marriage by this commandment, their marriage will never fail. The same goes for those of us who are members of Christ's Mystical Body: we are to love one another as our Blessed Saviour loved us. There are no substitutions and no exceptions. **We must try to love our neighbors as ourselves.** Now bear with me and consider some of the Trinitytide Gospels.

Trinity I (the Rich Man and Lazarus) teaches that it is not our wealth that condemns us but our greed and selfishness. Trinity II (Parable of the Great Feast) illustrates how much more important heavenly food (the Eucharist) is than earthly concerns (i.e., get to Mass). Trinity III (the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin) stresses the value God places on each of us and his determination to bring us home. Trinity IV (the Sayings of the Lord) reminds us not to find fault in others ignoring the same faults in ourselves. Trinity V (Peter's faith) teaches that all confirmed Christians, not just the apostles, are to be fishers of men. Trinity VI (Shades of Murder) is a lesson on the fine points of murder (i.e., the one does not have to kill to murder). Trinity VII (the Feeding of the Multitude) is a prophecy of the spiritual hunger that the Last Supper, the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Mass all satisfy. Trinity VIII (*by their fruits shall ye know them*) is akin to Trinity IV and reminds us that true religion is demonstrated by our good deeds not by words alone.

Trinity IX (the Prodigal Son) is a magnificent allegory that sets out the kind of love God has for us and we ought to have for our brothers and sisters. Trinity X is a little harder to understand but it is significant because it connects Our Lord's cleansing of the Temple with the Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Trinity XI (the Pharisee and the Publican) is an expose of just what true religion is. Trinity XII (the Healing of the Deaf Mute) is demonstration of Jesus' compassion which we must imitate. Trinity XIII (the Good Samaritan) is a pointed lesson on how we must treat those whom we dislike and those who dislike us. Trinity XIV (the Healing of the Ten Lepers) is not only another demonstration of Jesus' compassion but the importance of gratitude. Trinity XV (the Lilies of the Field) is an allegory of our trust in God and his goodness. Trinity XVI (the Widow of Nain) is a not just a charming story of Jesus' compassion, but a demonstration of his divine credentials. Trinity XVII is a rebuking of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and a lesson on the importance of humility. Trinity XVIII (Jesus confounds the Pharisees) is Jesus' proof text that he is the Messiah, the Son of God. And on these lessons go until the Sunday next before Advent.

When I was younger, I thought of Trinitytide as the long, dull, greentide! Now I cherish Trinitytide because it is filled with spiritual treasures. For I have learned (rather I continue to learn) that every Christian must live his or her life following these Trinitytide lessons because every one of these lessons transcends our temporal world with a spiritual joy beyond our understanding.



Never, Never, Never Give Up

The last six months have brought a new sense of isolation among our far-flung parishes. We feel frustrated, alone, and marginalized. Some of us cannot open our Church Doors because of government imposed mandates. Most of us cannot even visit the sick in hospitals or nursing homes. So, when I ask us to pray for the clergy, I mean it. They are taking an emotional beating. They need your prayers and support! Reach out to them by email or telephone. They will appreciate it.



Moreover, the clergy are fighting back. All over the Diocese, Zoom has become one of our chief weapons as more clergy are able to stream services despite some frustrating technical glitches. But with these glitches come new skills and ideas. I have been able to resume streamed masses in my Church (doors still locked) but Sunday Evening Prayer and Wednesday Evening Prayer are here to stay since it will probably be a long while before our immune compromised parishioners are able to return to live church services, Moreover, the Zoom outreach has brought a new sense of family joy to my spread-out parish and we have added to our numbers at least until the pandemic is over. It is such a delight to watch old family (Glendale, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles) and our new family members chatter in happy fellowship. I am so grateful to Father Britton (left),

Father Kelnhofer, Father Ternahan and Ellsworth Ramclam who share portions of the services with me.

From what I have gleaned (to the best of my knowledge – forgive any errors), Father Andrews in Cheyenne is open. Father Canda zooms from Denver. Deacon Ruffino (right) faithfully visits in Westcliffe and Colorado Springs. Father Ponec in Omaha is open. Father Lillegard and Deacon Wilcox stream the Mass and the Offices from Portland. Father Weber and Deacon Karcher stream the Eucharist and the Offices from Palo Alto. Bishop Hansen and Deacon Faith (and Deacon Jackson when he can) stream the Eucharist and the Offices from Chico. Father Isaacs streams the Eucharist and the Offices from San Rafael. Father Brown zooms Morning Prayer in Livermore. Father Shaddix and Father Napier zoom Sunday Mass from the Seminary Chapel in Berkeley. Canon Mitchell and Deacons Shepard and Lawrence are open in Redding. Father Kelnhofer in Concord is not able to open – but he assists me every week, a great blessing. Father Barrios in San Diego is cautiously opening. Father Mautner and Canon Dillon both stream the Eucharist and the Offices in Oakland and Oakville – and both are opening, St. Peter's outside, St. Stephens, inside! St. Jude's (Fr. La Barbera) in Grants Pass and Saint Paul's in Bend are both open. Saint Bartholomew's in Woodinville WA is open. Fr. Shaddix (in addition to Berkeley) regularly visits Holy Trinity in Sacramento and St. Paul's in Newman. Finally, Canon McNeely in San Francisco is open. May we all thank almighty God for these and all of our Diocesan clergy.



St. Joseph's Seminary in Full Swing

Saint Joseph's Seminary Fall classes are now underway. Bishop Hansen's history class began on Tuesday, August 24th and will continue until December. Bishop Ashman's Greek III-IV class began on August 28th and will continue until next Summer. Canon Ben Jones' Spiritual Discernment class began on Monday, September 14th and will run through December 7th at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time (4:00 p.m. Pacific Time) Plans are also underway for next semester, including a Deacon's Practicum taught by Bishop Ashman.

Dear Brother Clergy,

Do you feel isolated and alone on the front lines? Do you miss the camaraderie of your fellow clergy? Do you ever feel like you need to sharpen your skills theological knowledge? Then consider taking one of our Seminary Zoom classes. You will not only sharpen your skills and deepen your knowledge; you will do it with your brothers who labor in the Vineyard with you – and get to know those studying for the Sacred Ministry. Consider taking a class in the Winter-Spring session. And laity are welcome as well!

DWS Board of Directors Meet

The Corporation Board of Directors of the Diocese of the Western States oversees all finances and holdings of the Diocese including the preparation and presentation of an annual diocesan budget. Although our 2020 Synod was cancelled, the Board of Directors met according to the Canons via Zoom on September 23, 2020. The committee reviewed our finances and the state of the Diocese; and passed a \$112,700.000 budget. Therefore, the committee met its fiduciary responsibility and the Diocese has a budget in place until 2021.

A New Deacon Among Us – Deo Gratias

On the nineteenth of September, the Right Reverend Blair Schultz, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of the Atlantic States, ordained Mr. Samuel Talabi to the Sacred Order of Deacons at All Saints' Church in Bolingbrook, Illinois. Deacon Talabi has attended classes on site at Saint Joseph's Seminary as well as online Zoom classes, excelling in his studies and discernment. The Reverend Mr. Talabi was presented by the Reverend Mr. Robert Wilson, also of All Saints' parish where Deacon Talabi will serve.



A Sermon for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

And the Lord said, *“If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”* [Luke 17: 5-10]

Now when the apostles heard this, Simon Peter said, “Do we have to write this down?” And Andrew said, “Are we supposed to know this?” And James said, “Will we get a test on this?” And Philip said, “I forgot my paper!” And Bartholomew said, “Do we have to turn this in?” And John said, “You like me best. Do I have to do this too?” And Matthew said, “May I be excused to go to the bathroom?” And Judas said, “What does this have to do with real life?” Now there was a Pharisee present and he asked “Do you have a lesson plan? And a priest was also present, and he asked, “Are you planning to check for understanding? And finally, a Levite standing nearby asked “Do you have data to back up your teaching and assertions?”

Now this is an old story told in many variations, but the point is simple: none of Jesus listeners actually heard or appreciated what Jesus had said. These six verses are so characteristic of Luke in that Luke tries to emphasize in his telling of the Good News how the Value System of Eternity and our Blessed Lord are at odds with the value system of this world. God gives us Faith; and that Faith gives us strength to do that which we otherwise would not choose to do. We all know these commandments: genuinely try to love our neighbor as ourselves; do good to those who use us badly; be honest in all our dealings; live at peace with everyone as best we can – and in this parable is added: and when, by grace, you have done the best you can – all those things which are commanded you – then say that you are nothing special; that you have only done that which it was your duty to do. Don’t put yourself down; just be humble!

Saint Luke goes on to relate an amazing incident [Verses 11-19], an incident that reinforces his point. He tells how Jesus, when passing through Samaria and Galilee hears ten lepers, standing afar, begging him to cure them. And so, Jesus told them to go to the priests; and they did; and the priests certified that they were free from leprosy. An astonishing moment for those ten men! One minute they were outcasts, barred from society; the next, cured and able to be part of society again. Nine of them happily went on their way, but one came back to say thank you – and he was a hated Samaritan. And Jesus asks rhetorically where the other nine were and then tells the cured Samaritan that his faith has made him whole. In other words, he received a healing beyond the curing of his leprosy.

Now here is illustrated God’s Value System. No, Peter, you don’t have to write this down. Yes, Andrew you are supposed to know this. James, you will be tested on it every day. Philip, it doesn’t matter whether or not you forgot your paper. Bartholomew, this assignment is not optional; and John, in spite of my love for you, you must complete this assignment as well. No, Mr. Levite, Jesus is not going to give you data you can twist and distort so you can change its meaning for your self-centered purposes. And Judas, this Value System has everything to do with real life. Yes, Mr. Pharisee, God has a lesson plan, but it is not wrapped up in self-interest and self-love. And God’s Lesson Plan is that we realize that we are leprous sinners, that Christ has given us life, life now and life for eternity – and happy life now and for eternity. It is then that we realize that we are clean. But we only become wholly clean when we say thank you. Thank you, Blessed Saviour, for healing me. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. God’s Lesson Plan begins with our thanking God. And that gratitude invades our minds and spirits; and finally, it manifests itself in the way we treat our brothers and sisters.

2021 Ordo Kalendars

The 2021 Ordo Kalendars have been prepared, printed and are available for immediate purchase. The Ordo Kalendar 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.

Anglican Churchwomen Notes

Wow! 2020 has been a very strange year. First, we had the pandemic, which forced almost everyone to stay home, going out only to buy groceries or for medical visits. Families were forced together; parents became teachers and those who lived alone acquired new pets. Social distancing and face masks became the norm.

Then natural forces intervened. In the South there were hurricanes and floods, while here in the West we had devastating fires. Suddenly isolation was forgotten as neighbor helped neighbor and evacuees who had lost everything found themselves welcomed into the homes of total strangers. Firefighters came from all over the country and from overseas to help control the terrible fires, and donations of money, food and clothing came pouring in as individuals gave unstintingly to help one another.

This outpouring raised the question: what can ACW do to help in these troubled times? Our churches (for the most part) are closed, but our incredible clergy have found ways to bring us the comfort of Morning and Evening Prayer, and now even Holy Communion through the internet on Zoom, Facebook and YouTube. ACW members can keep in contact with members of their parish, especially those who live alone, and make sure they have the links to these services. They can also make sure that there is help for the lonely, elderly and frail, and regular contact by phone, email and even e-cards to help relieve depression and loneliness.

The women of the parish can also keep in touch with one another, by phone or by internet, and start looking forward! We WILL get back to church together, and meanwhile we can plan for the next synod, or a fund raiser for your parish. We need to support our clergy in these difficult times, as well as look forward to the next Bishop Morse Youth Camp. Plan your next project for the ACW Drawings at synod and let me know of any new ideas for fund raising. (gillian.golden@yahoo.com). Do not forget about our Country Store, and bring your jams, jellies, chutneys etc. to the synod!

We are all looking forward to getting together again. Stay positive!

Love and blessings to you all, *Gillian Golden*, ACW President



More California Fires – Please Pray

Please pray for those impacted by a new round of fires in Northern California. Canon Rusty Dillon, Canon Scott Mitchell, and Deacon Ben Lawrence (and maybe many others of our clergy and laity) have been under “*be ready to evacuate*” orders. Please keep them, their neighbors, and the fire crews in your intercessions.

Episcopal Visitation

On September nineteenth and twentieth, the Bishop visited Saint Bartholomew's parish in Woodinville, WA. On the nineteenth, the Bishop conducted a morning funeral and interment for a longtime friend, Mr. Robert Talbott. In the early afternoon, he conducted the Burial Office and interment for Mrs. Sylvia Sinnott. On Sunday, he celebrated the Eucharist. Covid notwithstanding, a terrific turnout.



Dear Brethren, Please, o Please send news and information from your parishes. It may not mean much to you but, to your fellow members of the Diocese, a picture or a story means a lot; they help us feel we are on the same team and not so isolated. +dma

The Last Word

The contemporary Church for some time has been concerned with satisfying the social needs of the lonely multitudes living in a secular desert. A spiritual drought separates them from love, for lust has replaced love. Television personalities have replaced real friendships. Workers isolated in computer stations, sitting alone before screens, represent today's civilization. God becomes an expletive, rather than a person.

We must not lose sight of the eternal in worship and word. The Atonement is the omega point, the culminating act of history. Here time and eternity cross in the Passion of Christ. Suffering, death, loneliness, and injustice are lifted and given meaning.

We must not lose sight of the eternal. We must strengthen our confreres to run the race and finish the course of life, to obtain that "*crown of glory that fadeth not away*," our end and destiny. In seeking the eternal, Christians must express love in time, in our fallen world, through corporal charity, the education of the young, and as an extended family within the Church.

+Robert S. Morse, 1996