



# ***The Shepherd's Staff***

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

***April 2019***

*The Right Reverend Donald M. Ashman  
bishopashman@gmail.com  
provostsjact@gmail.com*

## **From the Anglican Church Women**

April 8 is an important date for Diocese of Western States this year. It is the last day for registering for the Annual Synod before the rate increases, and the last day for making a hotel reservation at the group rate. For ACW, it is the last day to email pictures and descriptions of your contribution for the drawings to be held at the annual banquet. These drawings are so important for the Bishop Morse Youth Camp, the beneficiary of the funds raised. We **MUST** encourage and support our young people, the future of our church. Please email photos and descriptions of your church's contributions to this very worthwhile cause to: [gillian.golden@yahoo.com](mailto:gillian.golden@yahoo.com) no later than April 8, so that the brochure and tickets can be mailed to the churches in time for Easter. Sell as many tickets as you can and bring money and completed tickets to the Synod. Tickets should have name, church and phone number, together with the brochure number of the item they hope for!

April 8 is also the last day to mail any items you may have for the 'Welcome Bags' to: Nona Gourley, 2038 Carlsbad Caverns Court, Newman, CA 95360

While on the subject of raising money, we will have Lenten Boxes for 2020 available at the Synod in the Hospitality Room, and we ask that you take what you might need back to your church. This is an effort to save on postage, which seems to increase every year. Thank you all for your generous support.

## **Reminders and News**

- Please get your Parochial Reports into the Diocesan Office and to Bishop Hansen before the cutoff date of April 24<sup>th</sup>. Our Budget is contingent on your parish reports. Thank you!
- Again; Be sure to get your Synod and hotel reservations in on time which is April 8. Sending in your registration forms does not mean you have made hotel reservations. That must be done by calling the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa. If there are financial concerns, contact the Bishop.
- Check out our Provincial Website (<http://anglicanpck.org>) for deadlines, information and registration forms for the Bishop Morse Summer Youth Camp.
- Keep your clergy in your prayers and let them know that they are appreciated. Pray for vocations and for those men who are preparing for Holy Orders.

And speaking of vocations; in the Diocese of the Atlantic States, the Reverend Mr. Shannon Clark was ordained to the priesthood at the Church of the Holy Comforter in Montevallo Alabama on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Father Clark is known to many of us in the Western States as he has attended the Bishop Morse Youth Camp in Washington State and attended the Summer Session at Saint Joseph's Seminary in Berkeley. He is now priest-in-charge of Holy Comforter.



Above, left to right; Rich Goodwin, Father Dave Sweeney, Canon Michael Church, Canon Ben Jones, Bishop John E Upham, Father Shannon Clark, Bishop William Wiygul, Dr. John Schneider, Deacon Clancy Specht (Deacon of the Mass) and Mike McWilliams (Sub-Deacon of the Mass). Below, left; the newly ordained priest blesses one of his parishioners; Below, right; the laying on of Hands.





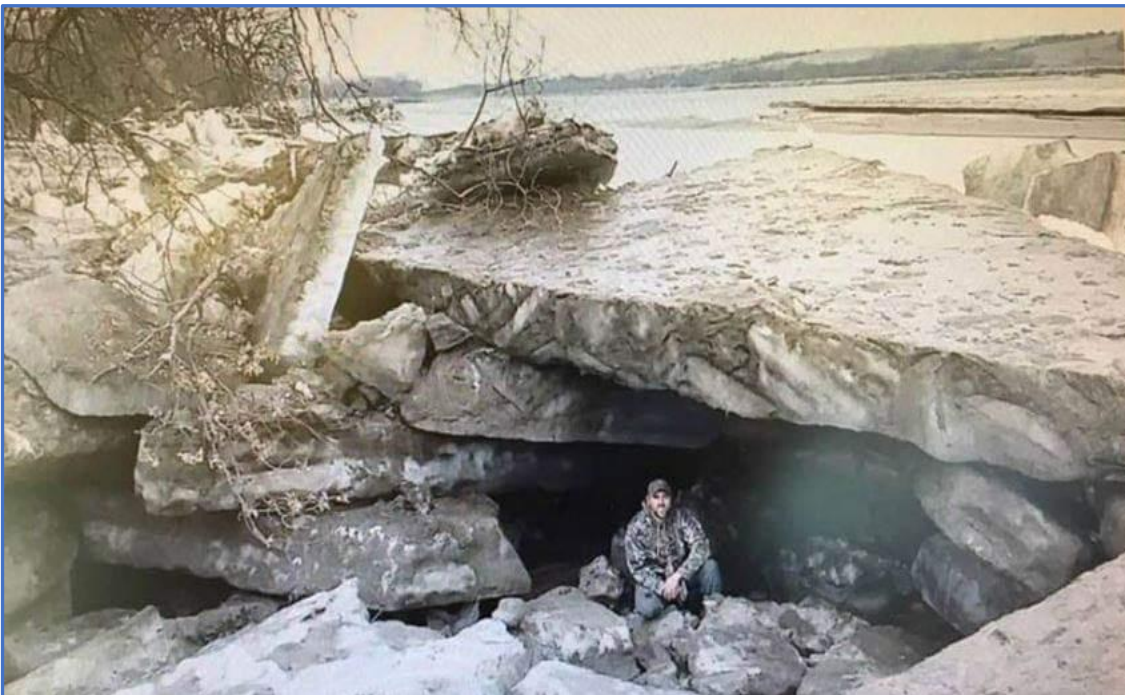
## A Plea for Help

Father Robert Ponec, Vicar of Saint John the Baptist Church in Omaha Nebraska, reports that Nebraska and Iowa are suffering from the effects of a devastating flood which is estimated to have caused destruction well above one billion dollars. Father and Deb are OK and so is the church, but bridges are completely washed away; concrete and asphalt streets have been picked up and tossed into adjacent houses; livestock has been killed and towns are completely cut off. Loss of human life stands at three individuals with several more missing. Supplies necessary for daily life and medical needs are being delivered by boat or dropped by small planes and helicopters to the trapped inhabitants.



Nearly half of Iowa counties and two-thirds of Nebraska counties (70%) have declared a state of emergency. Receiving three times the average snowfall this winter of over 40 inches, (highest total since 1966) sudden temperature changes from below freezing to something more moderate has caused nearly every river, stream, and creek to swell over their banks and levies into the surrounding areas. It is forecasted that most of the farm fields affected by the flooding will not be able to get a crop in the ground in 2019.

If anyone should feel moved to help, donations may be sent to Father Ponec at 10005 North 60th Street Omaha, NE 68152 or call Father Ponec at (402) 306-7386. The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which St. John's helps to support, is almost completely under water. The Reservation is the size of the state of Delaware and Rhode Island combined and was economically suffering before the flood.



*Massive sheets of ice slammed into bridges, roads, homes and businesses.*

## A Sermon for the Fourth Sunday in Lent

Bennet Cerf (one of the founders of Random House Publishing Company and a collector of puns and jokes) once related a touching story about a bus that was bumping along a back road in the South. In one seat a wispy old man sat holding a bunch of fresh roses. Across the aisle was a young girl whose eyes came back again and again to the old man's roses. When it came time for the old man to get off, he impulsively thrust the roses into the girl's lap. "I can see you love the flowers," he explained, "and I think my wife would like for you to have these roses. I'll tell her I gave them to you."

Flowers and roses in particular have always been a symbol of love! We give roses to show our love on special occasions like Valentine's Day and archeologists have found flower petals placed lovingly over the beloved dead, still with some color and scent. In Christianity, the rose came to be identified with the love of and for the Blessed Virgin (hence, the connection of Christ through Mary in the Rosary). The rose is the national flower of England, and dates to the English civil wars of the fifteenth century, in which a red rose represented the House of Lancaster, and a white rose represented the House of York. The succeeding Tudor dynasty created the Tudor rose, which united both the white and the red roses, with a white center surrounded by red.

Today is Rose Sunday, the midpoint of Lent, and the Church relaxes the rigors of Lent by using rose-colored vestments and roses on the altar which symbolize a day of joy in the middle of a season of penance and sorrow (sorrow for sin, that is). In fact, from the earliest days of church life, the rose has always been a symbol of tempered joy. St. Basil, one of the great fathers of the Eastern Church, used the rose to point out that Christians must be in this world but also owe allegiance to another world. St. Basil was referring to the great works of Classical Greek and Roman literature. He said that the ancient authors were like a rose bush, every branch had sharp thorns and flowers of exquisite beauty. The Christian should be free to pick the roses but avoid the thorns.

The rose and its thorns have often been compared to the closeness between joy and suffering, love and hate, courage and cowardice. The rose bush also symbolizes the suffering Christ had to endure before the joy of the Resurrection. The rose bush is also a symbol of our lives: how that sometimes we think and do good and just deeds but at other times we are stricken with guilt for the times we did not think or do good and just deeds. Finally, the rose and its thorns are a harbinger of eternal life; that is why we say so often: no cross, no crown.

The symbol of rose also is tied to today's Gospel. Jesus fed five thousand people with five barley loaves and two fishes. There is much symbolism and all of it is rooted in love. The Feeding of the Five Thousand was symbolic of the Last Supper which itself was the completion of the Passover Supper. So as the Children of the Hebrews were freed from human slavery by the Passover Supper, in like manner we are freed from the bondage of death by the Eucharist which is the Passover and the sacrifice of Calvary shared again and again in every Mass. And just as Jesus showed compassion on the human hunger in the wilderness, he shows an even greater love and compassion because, by his sacrifice on Calvary symbolized by the Last Supper, we are granted the gift of eternal life.

The rose is the great symbol of Christian Love and that love (which we call Charity) is the great chasm between heaven and hell. It is during Lent that we must struggle to love as Jesus taught us to love in his great miracles of compassion. We might not restore a leprous limb, but we might just restore a broken heart. We might not bring the dead to life, but we might help a brother or sister along the road to eternal life. And I think that is what the old man in the bus story did. You see, I didn't finish the story. The astonished little girl accepted the roses, but then watched the old man get off the bus and walk through the gate of a small cemetery.