



The Shepherd's Staff

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

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Why Lent?

About a century ago, there was a story told about a pastor in a small New England town. One Easter morning he came to the Church carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit. Several eyebrows were raised as he began his sermon. The preacher began, "I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me, swinging the bird cage now on the pulpit. On the bottom of the cage were three little, wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and asked, What do you have there, son? Just some old birds, said the boy. What are you going to do with them? I asked. Take 'em home and have fun with 'em. I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time. But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do then? Oh, I got some cats. They like birds. I'll give 'em to them." The pastor was silent for a moment and then asked, "How much do you want for those birds, son?" "Huh??!!! Why, you don't want them birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing - they ain't even pretty!" "How much?" The boy looked up at the pastor as if he was crazy and said, "Ten bucks!" So, the pastor reached into his pocket and took out a ten-dollar bill. He placed it in his hand. In a flash, the boy was gone.

Then he picked up the bird cage and gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. He set the cage down, opened the door, and gently persuaded the birds to set themselves free. Then the pastor told his flock his version of the story. One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation. Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting. "Yes, sir, I just caught the world full of people down there. I set a trap; I used bait I knew they couldn't resist. I told them that they could be gods! They could worship themselves! I got them all!" "What are you going to do with them?" Jesus asked. "Oh, I'm going to have fun! I'm going to teach them how to love themselves and hate their neighbors; how to lie, cheat, steal and gossip; how to abuse and betray each other; how to invent weapons and words to maim the heart, kill the body and wound the soul. In fact, I'm going to teach them to do all these things to each other in your name! I'm really going to have fun!" "And what will you do when you get done with them?" Jesus asked. "Oh, then they will be food and entertainment in my kingdom for eternity." Then Jesus asked Satan, "How much do you want for them?" "Oh, you don't want those people. They aren't any good. Why, you take them and they'll just hate you. They'll spit on you, curse you and kill you!! You don't want those no good, stiff-necked people!" "How much, asked Jesus?" Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, "All your tears, all your sweat, and all your blood." And Jesus said, "Paid in Full!" Then the pastor picked up the cage, opened the door, and quietly left the pulpit.

Don't Forget Department

- Keep a holy Lent by adding a new and spiritual dimension. Abstinence and Fasting are good (and, for some of us, a challenge) but there is also making a determined attempt to live the Beatitudes, read Morning or Evening Prayer and try, if possible, to come to mid-week services. Lent is also a good time for an attitude adjustment and by that, I mean how can we help others see Christ in us.
- Please try to get your Parochial Reports into the Diocesan Office and to Bishop Hansen well before the cutoff date of April 17th. Parish assessments and the Diocesan Budget are contingent on your parish reports and the treasurer must submit a balanced budget. Thank you, ahead of time. Your promptness really helps!
- If you have not yet signed up for our Diocesan Synod (May 6th to 8th), contact Nona Gourley ASAP and try to attend the optional retreat on Tuesday, May 5th (no extra fees) and remember there is extra time on Saturday, May 9th for a Eucharist and goodbye breakfast and/or brunches. Nona can be reached at lovemyminnie2@gmail.com
- Thank you to the parishes who have already sent Synod Support Donations. THANK YOU!
- Please use your Lenten Mite Boxes for the Provincial Anglican Church Women and used for the support of Saint Joseph of Arimathea Seminary and its seminarians. Contact Gillian Golden P.O. Box 558 Selma OR 97538; or gillian.golden@yahoo.com.
- Even if you don't have an active ACW, please don't forget to pay your parish ACW dues. Diocesan \$35 + Provincial \$15 = \$50 also sent to Gillian Golden
- Be thinking about the Bishop Morse Youth Camp in Stanwood Washington from Sunday, July 5th to Friday July 10th. Try to recruit campers and help to pay their way. This is one important way parishes can help to ensure the future of Christ's Kingdom. Consider donating to the Baugh Camp Fund.
- Saint Joseph's Seminary Summer Session will run from July 20th to July 31st. Again, as with youth camp, I encourage parishes to help seminarians attend. And this year we will be using Zoom for our lectures and other classes for those who cannot come.
- Please pray for each other, our Diocese, our Province and our clergy. Always ask yourself how you MIGHT be THAT person WHO makes a difference in someone else's life.

Mini Retreat Schedule

9:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer and The Litany	Father David LaBarbera
10:00 a.m.	Morning Meditation	Canon Scott Mitchell
11:00 a.m.	The Penitential Office and Bidding Prayer	Deacon Glenn Karcher
12:00 p.m.	Low Mass	Father Michael Mautner
1:00 p.m.	Afternoon Meditation I	Archbishop John E. Upham
2:00 p.m.	Readings from the Gospel of Saint Luke (Selected passages unique to Saint Luke)	Bishop Ashman - - - - -
3:00 p.m.	Afternoon Meditation II	tba (I still need a volunteer)
4:00 p.m.	Evening Prayer	Deacon Brian Faith

The theme of the retreat is *Be Still and Know that I am God*. Reservations are appreciated (Nona needs to know) and there are no fees or tickets to buy. And I will arrange a sack lunch at no cost, if you desire – but you must let me know. So, just come, set aside time to be quiet and get closer to God. Moreover, you do not need to be a Synod delegate or even from the Diocese of the Western States; you can bring a friend, and you can attend all or part of the retreat and Nona has kindly agreed to make all attendees a special identification badge. Remember, it doesn't matter how many of us participate or for how long; late arrivals are most welcome. The most important thing is that, unless we are participating in a service, we must try to be silent and think about what God would have us to think about.

Pictures of the Month



Our Diocesan family wants to know what is happening in our parishes and, even better, they like pictures. Please, o please help the Shepherd's Staff inform the Diocese about the activities of all our parish families. It may not mean much to you, but your news means a lot to others, especially the more isolated and smaller parishes.

The top left picture is of my Vestry in Los Angeles and Glendale of whom I am so indebted and so proud: (left to right) Hector Ideozu (Senior Warden), Judi Zimmer, Barbara Jackson, Ellsworth Ramclam (Junior Warden), Ronald Fox (Treasurer), Jerry Jewett (Clerk).

The top right picture is of Father Paul Hauge who assists at Saint Peter's Oakland and was recently honored on his eighty-ninth birthday. (Photo thanks to Pam Dammen)

Below Father Hauge is a picture of Gretchen and Father John Pennington of Saint Paul's in Bend, Oregon. The Penningtons just celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary. **[As the Shepherd's Staff went to press, we learned that Father Pennington has suffered serious medical complications and is hospitalized in Bend, Oregon. Please pray for him and Gretchen.]**

The lower left picture was taken at a January twenty-eighth luncheon in Chico at the Tap Room: (left to right) Deacon David Jackson (St Augustine's, Chico), Ellen Ashman (Our Saviour, Los Angeles), Father Craig Isaacs (Saint David's, San Rafael), Canon Scott Mitchell (Saint Luke's, Redding), Bishop Ashman, Deacon Ben Lawrence (Saint Luke's, Redding), Bishop Peter Hansen (St. Augustine's, Chico), Giti Hansen (Saint Augustine's, Chico), and Deacon Brian Faith (Saint Augustine's, Chico)

Twenty-Five Years and Counting

We all try to fight the good fight and whether we materially win is not the point, if we are laboring spiritually in the fields of our Saviour. On Wednesday, February 19th, Saint Augustine of Canterbury Parish in Chico [host parish for this year's Synod] celebrated its twenty-fifth year of the parish's move into their beautiful neo-Gothic parish. Below is an article written for the readers of *The Shepherd's Staff* by our Suffragan Bishop, the Right Reverend Peter F. Hansen which he calls *Miracle at 3rd and Salem*.

This is the story of a building and 115 years of faithful Anglicans. Originally built 3 blocks from the current site in downtown Chico as St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, this beautiful neo-Gothic church by architect Arthur B. Benton has been described as one of the most distinguished churches in northern California. Wood framed, with brick and shingle walls, it's the tale of faithful people following the Anglican way.

Ground was first broken for the church on Feb. 1, 1904. It was opened for worship January 1, 1905. But in 1910, the U.S. Government bought the site for \$25,000 for a Post Office. St. John's had to be moved to its current location, adding a rectory and eventually a social hall wing.



Decades rolled by with generations worshiping and being taught the faith. St. John's became interested in relocating to a newer part of town to build a modern church, running for a while out of two locations. Eventually, in 1982, they sold the downtown classic church. The church was deconsecrated by Bishop Thompson, as unhappy church members walked a picket line in protest. The new owners converted the church into the Dynasty, Shell Cove and Fuji Sushi complex he called Union Square. But despite there being three bars one block from the Chico State campus, the venture failed, and bankruptcy closed it in 1991.

In 1980, a small group of Episcopalians, displaced by The Episcopal Church enacting women's priesthood and new Book of Common Prayer, started St. Augustine of Canterbury Church. The Rev. Boardman C. Reed, a retired Episcopal priest was called, but only served once or twice a month. Soon Fr. Reed began another church in Redding as well. St. Augustine's called the Rev. Peter F. Hansen as its rector in 1991. Fr. Hansen announced that they were meant to purchase and restore the old church.

The Bank of the Orient, holder of the deed after the restaurant's foreclosure, wanted \$1.5 million to sell the complex, but listed at \$950,000. After a year it re-listed at \$850,000, a year later for \$695,000. St. Augustine's was under-bid by the Associated Students Union of Chico State, who bought the building for \$520,000. The buy was contingent, however, on passing the university seismic code. Fr. Hansen (with a Bachelor of Architecture degree), knew this could never happen: the 90-year-old structure could never pass. He publicly announced the church's intention to buy the historic church.

The ASU dropped their escrow and St. Augustine's held a parish meeting. An offer of \$450,000 was approved. The church owned a small church and had about \$90,000 but was quite small in membership, having about 35 people in attendance. It would take a true miracle.

Miracles happen. The bank accepted the \$450,000 in June of 1994, closing September 22 when the building became ours. Immediately demolition began. Sales of artifacts, restaurant equipment, and building tours brought in needed money.

A pair of copper boxes were discovered encased in the brick foundations of the church. An old Bible, Prayer Book, history of the original church and other items were recovered. The old sanctuary was restored from a purple restaurant to stately Anglican worship. The original stained-glass windows were opened to light once again, and the highest image in all the windows was a cross and crown: Christ the King. Pulpit, altar dais and all the elements of a traditional church were built back in. An iron cross was re-erected on the steeple.

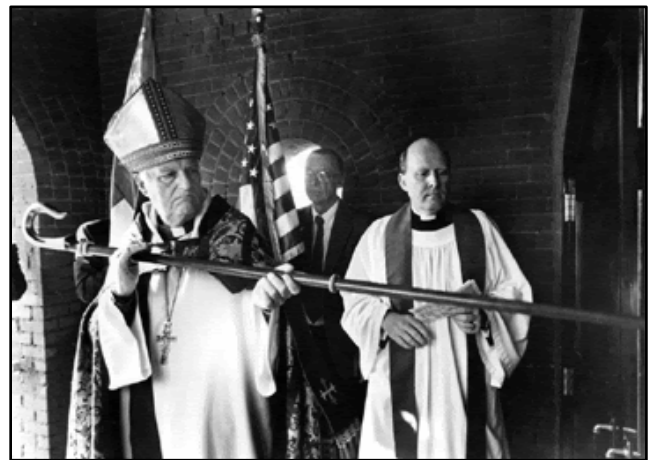


Now, once more a holy place of worship, St. Augustine's speaks of the Presence of God as a physical expression of faith, built of plaster, wood, sweat and generously given funds. An old 1878 English pipe organ was restored and installed in the sanctuary.

The little neo-Gothic church once again became a worship sanctuary and a living part of downtown Chico. The building bespeaks the elegance of worship. God is certainly pleased. The congregation, in its re-opening on February 19, 1995, now 25 years ago, chose as its theme: "Non nobis, Domine", "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy Name be the glory." Psalm 115

In 25 years, the building has opened its doors to other groups, organizations such as the Campus Crusade for Christ, Catacombs (Southern Baptist), InterVarsity, Women's Resource Clinic, prolife prayer vigils, law enforcement prayer meetings, and other city-wide events. It's shared the space with several start up church works: Baptist, Korean Seventh Day Adventist, and an Orthodox Church parish. St. Augustine's feels this building belongs to God for the sake of the entire city, not just for ourselves.

St. Augustine's managed to pay off all debts in 2001, and a consecration was held on November 25, 2001, by Archbishop Robert Sherwood Morse. The church is still without debt. The history of a 115-year-old building can be much like the story of a person's life: full of hope, first love, great expectations, and also set-backs, breakdowns, and disillusionments, then resurrection. But the difference in the life of this building, as in the lives of those who have worshipped here, is the God who inhabits both and has saved both for something better.



Rectors of St. Augustine of Canterbury:

1980-1987 The Rev. Canon Boardman C. Reed (R.I.P.)

1987-1989 The Rev. Glenn P. Bock (R.I.P.)

1990-1991 The Rev. Earl Warren Angell

1991-present The Rt. Rev. Peter F. Hansen

A Sermon for Quinquagesima Sunday

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A tired, overworked waitress put a glass of water in front of him and he asked, "How much is an ice cream sundae?" "Fifty cents," replied the waitress. The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it. "How much is a dish of plain ice cream?" he asked. Some people were now waiting for a table and the waitress (whose feet hurt) was a bit impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she said brusquely. The little boy again counted the coins. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said. The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and departed. When the waitress came back, she began wiping down the table and then swallowed hard. On the table, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies - her tip.

I remember that I last told this story of the boy and the ice cream in a sermon way back in the nineties. I don't have a copy of it anymore. Nevertheless, I still think it is charming and childlike, not childish. It is a parable about the innocence and kindness we should all exercise. It is about love. I taught school; I deal with clergy. I don't need to tell you that the world lacks love and yet it still amazes me – God amazes me – that every time I become cynical, love pops up somewhere, usually where I would least expect to find it: in a teenager, in a stranger, in someone I thought did not like me, in someone I thought I didn't like. The work of God the Holy Ghost continues to be mysterious and alive; pervasive and unceasing. Today's Epistle, that magnificent essay on love, reminds us that we are nothing without charity; that we must put away childish things and be as childlike as God.

St. Augustine of Hippo wrote a sermon about today's Gospel and in it he pointed out that we must love God just like we love what we consider precious here on earth. He says that we love gold and silver and precious stones because of their beauty and permanence and that we love light because we are afraid to die. He then transfers that imagery to the Gospel and blind Bartimaeus, who lived in a world of darkness; whose sins made him dead before God and in his society. So, when the doomed man heard that Jesus was passing by, he cried out from a tree: *Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me*. The crowd rudely told him to be quiet, but he shouted more loudly: *Thou son of David, have mercy on me*. So, Jesus had him brought over and asked him what he wanted. Bartimaeus said: *Lord, that I may receive my sight*. Then Jesus – his voice ringing with authority – tells him that his Faith has saved him, and his sight was restored.

Bartimaeus desperately wanted to see the light of this earth; what Augustine called the light of the body. But Augustine also saw the mystical because in this miracle he saw God the Holy Ghost showing us a vision of God's kingdom or what Augustine called the light of the soul. Bartimaeus wanted to see a world of flesh and blood but God wants his children to see a world of virtuous living – a world of love. So, Saint Augustine tells us to love Christ and to seek his light - and points out that all this happened as Jesus was passing by a blind man who knew he needed help. Then Augustine makes the connection that every hour of every day Jesus passes by each of us and offers us the light of the soul. But what does it mean, passing by? It means all that Jesus has endured for us: his birth, his teaching, his miracles, his passion, his death, his resurrection, his ascension and his eternal glory – all of these are his passing by - but do we choose to see?

I remember Bishop Morse – years ago– telling the story of an old monk in a Spanish monastery who was humble and did the chores no one else would do. When he lay dying, all the brothers were at his bedside. And as he approached the end, he cried out, "I see it! I see it!" Asked what he saw, he swelled with joy and said, "I see love!" – and then collapsed with a smile. I have left out some of the details (that's really not the point) but the story reaffirms the love we strive for is the essence of God; that when we are cruel or mean or vengeful or even angry, we blind ourselves to the Saviour passing by in front of us; but that every time we are kind or gentle or forgiving or generous – like the little boy in the hotel coffee shop who showed Christ passing by to a tired, overworked waitress – **our** eyes are opened and we see God; we see love.