



The Shepherd's Staff

***Newsletter of the
Diocese of the Western States
Mid-March 2020***

Special Edition

19 March, AD 2020

The Feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the BVM

TO: All the Clergy and Laity of the Anglican Province of Christ the King

FROM: The Archbishop and the Council of Bishops

I am writing to you today out of the abundance of Love that Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, has for you all and as if I were able to be in each of your churches and homes during this turbulent time to speak to you in person. Covid-19 (Coronavirus) has caused all of us to begin adjusting to a new “normal” in both our professional and personal lives. Many school systems have closed, restaurants and other dining establishments have suspended eat-in options and now are offering only curbside take out. Many businesses have had to furlough their employees. We are now to practice “social distancing” and our border with Canada has closed to all but essential traffic. All of which in an attempt to slow the progression of the virus.

The personal and economic disruption of Covid-19 is something which many of us have never experienced during our lifetime. These times, for us, are unprecedented. The developments associated with this pandemic are extremely fluid and are changing rapidly. We, too, need to remain adaptable as we strive to adjust to its challenges. All of us need to be vigilant, not fearful; prepared, not anxious; aware, but not desperate; generous, not hoarding; calm, not panicking; and use common sense as we acclimate to this new norm. St. Paul reminds us in his second Epistle to St. Timothy, “For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and a sound mind.”

In recent weeks we have experienced an increase in the number of Coronavirus cases and the number is climbing every day. We have not reached the peak of the outbreak. Different areas of our country are under different mandates as local health officials try to stem the number of people infected ~ all the way from limiting sizes of groups, practicing “social distancing”, to legal “shelter in place” orders from civil authorities. Many of our Parishes, depending upon the severity of the outbreak in different areas of the country, have already curtailed social gatherings, limited the number of their services, chosen to close altogether, or are under mandates from the civil authorities to close. Although some may question the legalities of such “orders”, it is important for us, now, to obey them. As long as they do not conflict with God’s laws, as St. Paul reminds us, we are to obey the civil magistrates.

The Council's concern is not that Covid-19 will be transferred by receiving the Chalice at the Holy Communion (if that were the case, we would be getting sick every time a virus went through the community), but it is a matter of those who appear to have lesser symptoms (younger people) being in close proximity with those of our older or health-compromised Church populations who seem to have more severe, even life-threatening, complications from this virus. This exposure between people is what must be limited for now.

Given these and other important considerations, I called a meeting of the Council of Bishops on Wednesday (yesterday) to discuss these matters and to map a way forward in these uncharted and treacherous waters. The Council agreed, unanimously, that foremost, we must protect the faithful from being exposed to the virus. Therefore, out of an abundance of caution and by God's Grace, I am urging the clergy of the APCK to close the doors of our Parishes (and Missions) and to suspend all public services, Sundays and weekdays, for the next two weeks, March 22nd (Lent IV) and March 29th (Lent V), inclusive, in an effort to keep our people safe; as of the date of this letter. I am asking the Bishops to send this Pastoral Letter out to their Parishes and am also asking the Clergy to send the same out to their membership via the email lists for their parishes and contact by telephone those who may not have or use email. The Bishops will re-evaluate this situation the week of March 29th and every two weeks thereafter until this situation is passed. All of you will be kept informed by your Bishops.

Moving forward, and I want to be clear on this, we are neither running nor hiding from this virus! The Church is not afraid and she withdraws from nothing! I am charging the Clergy of the Province to explore new ways of ministering to their parishes; holding services via ZOOM or Skype, You Tube or Facebook ~ any way we can remain in ministry and in touch with one another. I have heard some Parishes are already exploring these options and I encourage all of us to do the same. At the very least, via these and other platforms, you and your parish could say Morning Prayer with the Litany including sermons, as well.

Finally, I have a few words for our Priests, Deacons, and the Laity. Priests – Stay at your posts as the spiritual head of your Parish. You are not hirelings, you are shepherds. You may not be able to be physically present at the Church, in the neighborhood, or visit parishioner's homes but be present to your people as much as you are able ~ by telephone, computer, or whatever means you have at your disposal. If there is serious illness, you need to administer Last Rites, or there is some other pastoral emergency, – GO! But do not put yourselves in harm's way. Use common sense. Take the necessary precautions. You are of no use to anyone if you get sick . . . or worse. Deacons – Assist your brother Priests as faithful servants in the charism of your Order; seeing to the needs of the sick, the infirm, the elderly; doing whatever you can by helping deliver groceries, medications, or helping with other needs your people may have. But, again, use precautions when you go to minister among the people. Laity – Now, more than ever, strive to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and to His Church with your prayers and your commitments to your local Parish. Read your Daily Offices, earnestly. Pray for your Bishops, your Clergymen, your Parish, Diocese, and Province. Pray that this scourge will pass. Prayer is the greatest and most efficacious gift we possess because it comes directly from God. Above all, please stay safe! To all of you, as the early Church did, stay in touch with each other, always, but especially now and let your clergymen know of any illnesses or other pastoral situations of which they need to be aware. As we do these things, the Church will remain visible; both to her faithful people and to the world, even in the midst of this pandemic. We will not disappear into hiding but will change our visibility and adopt the attitude and characteristics of the early Church under persecution. When this pandemic is over and we emerge, we will be stronger and greater than before as we continue the work of God and His Church! For the Love of God and the Sake of the Gospel,

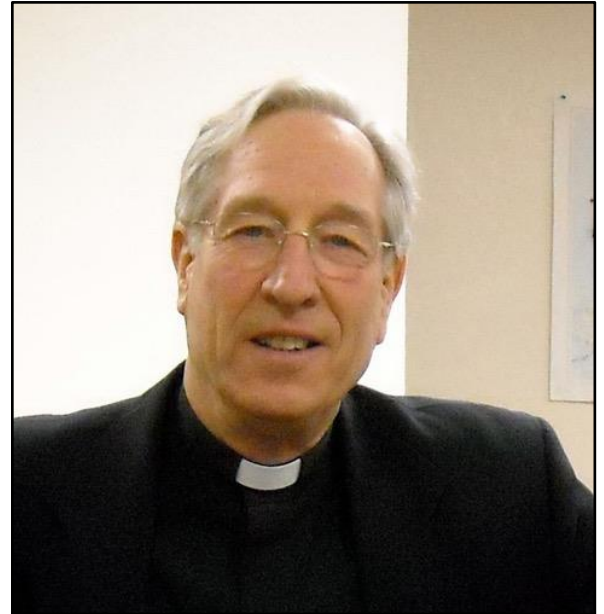
+The Most Reverend John E. Upham, Jr
Archbishop (For the Council of Bishops)

Father John Burnhill Pennington – May He Rest in Peace

Well Done Good and Faithful Servant

John Burnhill Pennington was born in 1933 in Norwalk, CT. He was preceded in death by his father John Plaskett Pennington; his mother Jessie Burnhill Pennington; his stepmother Winifred Pennington and his brother Ronald Pennington. He leaves behind is his wife of 60 years Gretchen V. Pennington, his four children Sean Pennington, Mollie Pennington, Christian Pennington & Erin Pennington; his 8 grandchildren and his sister Kathy Gloster and brother Doug Pennington.

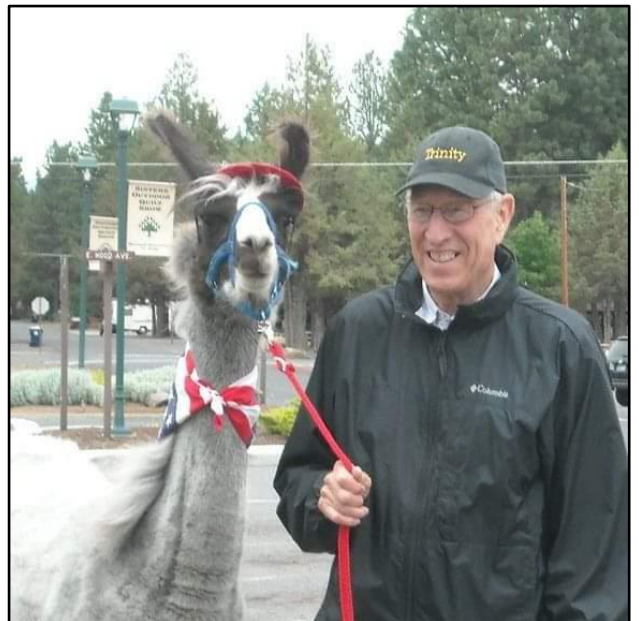
John served in the Navy from 1952-1955 in the Korean War. Met his wife Gretchen while he attended West Virginia Wesleyan College, where he played football and ran track. He worked in Connecticut, Colorado, California, Pennsylvania, Wyoming and Oregon. John loved the outdoors! He was runner, a fisherman, a bird watcher, enjoyed tennis, riding his bike and walking; and loved his family. John worked for the American Machine & Foundry (Connecticut/California 1960-1962, UC Davis – Maintenance Manager/Campus housing 1962 – 1978, Humboldt State University – Housing Manager 1978-1982



John felt called to attend Trinity School for Ministry in 1982. He and Gretchen with their two younger children left for Ambridge, PA leaving their two eldest in California. John graduated in 1986 with a Masters in Divinity and was blessed to be called and serve at St. David's in Venetia, PA (under the Priest he had been blessed to do his internship under at All Saints church in Aliquippa, PA during his seminary years).

After almost five years at St. David's John felt called to seek ministry closer to our older children and a door opened in Green

River, WY. After 13 years in Green River (first at St. John's and later with Church of the Epiphany) we returned to California for health reasons, as well as feeling it was time to be nearer our children and grandchildren. We were blessed for 2 years in a warm independent Christian body when John felt from God to worship at St. Augustine's Anglican Church in Chico, CA.



After six years in Chico, CA he responded to a call to serve St. Paul's Anglican Church in Redmond, OR where he was still serving until the Lord called him home February 28th, 2020.

From C. S. Lewis...

Something to Consider in These Days

"In one way we think a great deal too much of the atomic bomb. How are we to live in an atomic age?" I am tempted to reply: "Why, as you would have lived in the sixteenth century when the plague visited London almost every year, or as you would have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia might land and cut your throat any night; or indeed, as you are already living in an age of cancer, an age of syphilis, an age of paralysis, an age of air raids, an age of railway accidents, an age of motor accidents."

In other words, do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation. Believe me, dear sir or madam, you and all whom you love were already sentenced to death before the atomic bomb was invented: and quite a high percentage of us are going to die in unpleasant ways. We had, indeed, one very great advantage over our ancestors—anaesthetics; but we have that still. It is perfectly ridiculous to go about whimpering and drawing long faces because the scientists have added one more chance of painful and premature death to a world which already bristled with such chances and in which death itself was not a chance at all, but a certainty.

This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb, let that bomb when it comes find us doing sensible and human things—praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts—not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about bombs. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds.

"On Living in an Atomic Age" by C. S. Lewis from the book, *Present Concerns* (pages 73-80).

***Postscript; if the above offends you, see number 3 and the story of Saint John below

What We Can Do!

We have no idea how the current situation will affect our Diocesan Synod, the Bishop Morse Youth Camp or the Seminary Session in Berkeley. Everything is up in the air and on the table. By Passion Sunday we ought to know more but even that remains uncertain, but we can do the following to continue the work of the Church in what seems to be a temporary new normal.

1. Pray for each other especially our Suffragan Bishop along with the priests and deacons of our Diocese.
2. Try to participate in whatever at distance services our parishes are able to provide. A number of parishes are planning to use online technology such as Zoom for Sunday outreach.
3. Pray especially for the gift of Charity. This is no time to second guess, gripe or engage in fault finding.
4. Rather, seek ways that to be helpful for those (neighbors, friends, fellow parishioners) who might need a little extra help.
5. (Treasurers and Vicars/Rectors) try to get those annual reports in by April 17th.
6. Use your Lenten Mite Boxes at home (or use your own box) to collect a Lenten Offering for the ACW.

What We Can Must Do!

*There is a wonderful story told about Saint John the Apostle, who was closest to our Blessed Lord, that dates to the earliest days of the Church and conveys to us the essence of just who Saint John was. When Saint John was an old man and too weak to celebrate the liturgy, he would be carried to the front of the church for the sermon and every Sunday would say: Little children, love ye one another. Some thought the old man was losing it (senile) and challenged him but he replied: **It is the Lord's command, and if only that is done, it would be enough.** May we go and do likewise!*