

The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)
www.stedmund.ca



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada
(A member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion)

UPDATE

December 8, 2007 - The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

January Schedule

January 1	Tuesday	The Octave Day of Christmas / The Circumcision of Christ
January 6	Sunday	The Epiphany of Our Lord
January 13	Sunday	The First Sunday after The Epiphany
January 20	Sunday	Septuagesima
January 25	Friday	The Conversion of St. Paul
January 27	Sunday	Sexagesima

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**
- (3) On weekdays - **Major Holy Days** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.**, **10:00 a.m.** on Saturday.

Notes and Comments

- 1) Two pieces from the *Catholic Herald - Traditional Anglicans ask to be reunited with Holy See* and *We should give Traditional Anglicans a warm welcome* - this page and page 3.
- 2) For *Robert's Ramblings - A summer holiday* - page 3.
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- 8) Another update - *More on Zambia and Congo* - page 10.

Traditional Anglicans ask to be reunited with Holy See

Rebel Anglican bishops representing a flock of 400,000 have asked to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church, it emerged this week.

The Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC), the world's largest breakaway Anglican group, sent a letter to Rome requesting "full, corporate and sacramental union".

About 30 bishops and vicars general agreed unanimously on the letter when they met for their plenary assembly in Portsmouth, Hampshire, last month.

Their decision is the result of more than a decade of talks between the TAC and several senior figures in the Vatican, including Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. If full communion were reached the group would become the largest Anglican assembly ever to return to the Catholic Church. Entire parish communities might be received into the Catholic Church in a single ceremony.

Archbishop John Hepworth of Australia, the TAC primate, said in a statement that the letter had been "cordially" received by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. But the contents of the letter have been kept secret and the statement said that none of the TAC bishops would give interviews until the Holy See had responded.

It is understood that the bishops have accepted the teachings of the Catechism and that Archbishop Hepworth has offered to step down to the level of a priest.

The breakaway group emerged in America in 1977 and declared its intention in a founding document to seek "full sacramental communion and visible unity with other Christians who 'worship the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity', and who hold the Catholic and Apostolic faith."

It now includes member churches in Canada, America, Ireland, England, southern Africa, Australia, India, Pakistan and Japan.

The group has a strong presence in North America - there are about 100 congregations in the United States, South Africa and Australia. It claims the entire Anglican population of the Torres Strait islands, which cluster around the northern tip of Australia.

In Ireland hundreds of Anglicans attend the Church of Ireland (traditional rite) at three parishes in Newtownards in Co Down, Eskra in Co Tyrone and Stradbally in Co Laois. There are also a number of smaller parishes in England. Bishops have been holding informal talks with the Vatican about the possibility of communion since the founder of the TAC, Archbishop Louis Falk, travelled to Rome 13 years ago.

Fr Peter Geldard, Catholic chaplain at the University of Kent and a former Anglican priest, has been consulted on the subject by both the TAC and the Vatican.

He spoke several times with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger who he said was very concerned about how to resolve the situation.

"[Benedict XVI] is very knowledgeable on this whole area and has taken it very seriously," he said.

Fr Geldard stressed that the arrangement to preserve some of the TAC's Anglican identity

should be made so that it can be applied to other rebel groups, as well as potential converts from the official Anglican Communion.

Fr Geldard also raised the possibility that the Vatican might appoint a Rome-based prelature with authority over the group around the world.

From the *Catholic Herald* - October, 2007

We should give Traditional Anglicans a warm welcome

The news that the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC) has asked to be received into full communion with the Holy See is not only significant in itself: it is also evidence of a change of mood among conservative Catholic Anglicans all over the world. The TAC has some 400,000 members; if a majority of these are received into the Catholic Church, then we should rejoice at the healing of a wound in the Body of Christ. And there will be particular cause for rejoicing if this reception takes a corporate form. We have become so used to thinking of conversion as a purely individual process that we forget that in earlier centuries the Church experienced sudden outbursts of growth, as non-Christians or non-Catholic Christians followed their leaders into communion with Peter.

We do not know, at this stage, under what circumstances the TAC - which broke away from mainstream Anglicanism in the 1970s - will "cross the Tiber". The Traditional Anglicans and the Holy See are very sensibly keeping quiet on the matter; what we can say is that there are several possible models for corporate reunion: for example, there are rare examples of American parishes using a liturgy incorporating Anglican texts. Married priests are not a problem; married bishops certainly are; but there is no point in guessing the terms of reunion, because such guesswork tends to raise false expectations and is counterproductive.

Any eventual agreement will be scrutinised extremely carefully by Anglo-Catholics who still belong to the Anglican Communion. Fifteen years ago, when the Church of England decided to ordain women priests, commentators on both sides of the ecumenical divide indulged in speculation about a "Roman option" that would enable parishes to convert en masse. These plans came to nothing, though many Anglican clergy and lay people were

received into the Church individually, to our enormous benefit. What went wrong? Perhaps the time was not right; perhaps religious leaders were guilty of a failure of imagination. Certainly some English Catholic bishops were less welcoming than they might have been; their excuse was that they were worried about receiving converts who appeared to be converting over a single issue.

That excuse does not apply now. For, while it is true that the Anglican *casus belli* is homosexuality, the fundamental problem is the collapse of episcopal order. That is hardly a single issue. Moreover, there are growing indications that potential converts are turning to Rome not out of desperation, but because they are attracted by the ministry of Pope Benedict, who has a deep appreciation of the Catholic traditions within Anglicanism.

The Holy Father's radical commitment to improving liturgy, powerfully expressed in *Summorum Pontificum*, has done more to break down barriers between Anglicans and Roman Catholics than decades of ARCIC negotiations. It may be that, as with the latest *Motu Proprio*, the Pope will need to issue a ruling that he has drawn up himself: local opposition cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the Holy Spirit. Whatever happens, we can be sure of one thing: he will act in a spirit not of triumphalism, but of prayer.

From the *Catholic Herald* - October 2007

Robert's Ramblings

A summer holiday

For the most part I stay away from countries where I can't speak the lingo, which of course means most places. In some tourist places a la Rome many local people do speak English, so anxious are they to please American visitors with their abundant dollars. Many years ago I did have a week end in France with a brother CR who could manage some French.

Last year I was in clover: my Dutch friend Gustav, who invited me to drive around France with him for 10 days, is multilingual. On the way back via Luxemburg we strayed into Germany by mistake. In parts of Luxemburg they speak German, in other parts French. Gustav was equal to the situation wherever we found ourselves. I remember a splendid long lunch in a restaurant in

the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg in the shadow of His Serene Highness' palace which towered over us on the local mountain. Gustav chatted away in French and German to the locals, in Dutch to fellow tourists from Holland, and to me in English. "Oh listen", he said to me, "the people at that table are speaking the rarely heard language of Luxemburg itself". I remember many leisurely meals in the Republic of France at which our Dutch hosts who have holiday homes there, chatted away in three languages. I remember a meal in Limburg, the southern most province of Holland, where Gustav said, "Oh listen, the people at that table are speaking the rarely heard language of Limburg itself". Shame-facedly I have crept home armed with new Dutch grammars, dictionaries and *Teach Yourself Dutch* on CD's. We of Brit descent really are inadequate.

I hadn't realized how agricultural France has always been and still is, how much space there is. Mile after mile of maize fields, of vineyards, of forests, were a welcome relief after the over crowdedness of England. We avoided cities, kept to villages, country towns, places of historical interest. As in Italy, many of the old towns, dating perhaps to Roman or even Celtic times, were once fortified places on top of hills. I hadn't realized how far up into France the Roman Empire had penetrated. I hadn't realized the strength of the French church in Roman times, how many saints and martyrs it produced. I had expected to find traces of devotion to such saints as St Therese Lisieux and the Cure D'ars, and did, but they were outnumbered by saints I'd never heard of and whose names I have already forgotten.

Travelogues can be wearisome so I shall try to avoid excessive detail. But what of those things we associate with France, sunshine, food, wine? France proved as damp and dizzy as England often is, and certainly was for most of last year. We had more and better Mediterranean weather in Holland, an unusual reversal of fortune. On the whole France is not kind to vegetarians. Fed up with salads, in Burgundy I asked for the local cheeses. Four of them came on a board, just small pieces, but was I in ecstasy! The waitress said, "You eat them in this order, from left to right". With them we drank first white Burgundy and then red. Of course we drank much wine all over the place but that which I enjoyed most of all was provided by the Dutch couple with whom we stayed first. "Oh, it hasn't got a name", they said, "we just get it at the supermarket with our groceries". I became quite addicted to this

particular variety.

Agriculture is having a hard time in France. Farms are abandoned. Small villages decay and die. Churches close. One place we were in had one mass a year. In another the curé had to care for 20 scattered congregations. Sounds rather like the rural C of E! The European Community and common currency bring changes. Brits and Dutchmen buy properties in France as holiday homes, or even as primary homes. In some places they live in expatriate ghettos, associating only with their own kind. Gustav is friendly with three couples, college lecturers like himself, who have made a point of not being ugly Dutchmen abroad. They have gone native, so to speak. One man even acts as a voluntary tour guide in the cathedral of Autun, offering services in English, French, Dutch and perhaps even German. They have converted, or are in the process of converting, farm houses and barns into homes. In one of them we were put to sleep in in the former cowshed, the floor of which had not been altered one iota. Ideal for stubbing toes in the middle of the night! In all the villages we were rewarded with the rich aroma of farm.

You will forgive me perhaps if I mention three cities.

1. **Reims!** The cathedral there, all lacy airy Gothic, was once the sort of Westminster Abbey of France, in that the kings used to be anointed there, before the French Revolution, Clovis the First Christian king of a united France having been anointed and crowned there by a Saint Somebody. Medieval glass but even more impressive modern glass by Marc Chagall, the Russian Jew.

2. **Vezelay!** A city set on a hill, a steep one at that. The Romanesque cathedral claims to have the bones of St Mary Magdalene, but then so does somewhere else nearby. The cathedral currently in the care of a Community of Jerusalem (new to me), men and women relatively conservative, in long habits, singing their mid day office in choir to Gelineau chants, which sound OK in French even if they sound whiney in English. The cathedral white, clean, well cared for, a harmonious gem.

3. **Bibracte!** An ancient Celtic city atop Mount Beuvry. All there is to show for it now are a few ruins here and there, but once a vibrant centre for trade. When Caesar invaded, the Gallican tribes or Gauls formed a federation to resist. They elected Vercingetorex of the Belgae (in modern Belgium) to lead them. Caesar won decisively and captured the city. He wintered on this mountain and whiled away the hours by writing there *"De Bello*

Gallico". "All Gaul is divided into three parts". Little did I dream when in high school, bored to death trying to translate from Latin, that I'd see the very place where the dreary book was written. Later the Romans abandoned the mountain in favour of a new city on the plain below, now called Autun, a corruption of *Augustus Donum* i.e. Augustus' gift. This city's other claim to fame, apart from Caesar Augustus of *Luke* 2,1, was its wicked aristocrat and bishop Talleyrand, a man so devoid of conscience that he outdid even the Vicar of Bray. "And this is the plan I have always obeyed, To shun all moral restriction, And never be afraid to change my deep conviction". I realized that though the French speak a Romance language, derived from the Latin of their ancient conquerors, they are genetically Celt mixed with Germanic: when the Empire collapsed Gaul was next conquered by the Germanic tribe called Frank. This means they are of the same genetic mix as the British, even though English is a Germanic tongue.

We live and learn.

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

Spiritual Journeys 2008

In April, 2008, a small group is planning to travel on pilgrimage to Syria, to see a 'Street named Straight', St. Paul's window, St. Ananias Chapel, Aleppo, Palmyra and many other early Christian sites, and to Jordan, to the site of the Baptism of Our Lord, Mount Nebo, the city of Amman, as well as the ancient city of Petra. This journey will be for two weeks, with flights from Canada to Amman, Jordan. Land cost would be approximately \$1600.00, including hotels and travel, arranged by a professional tour operator in Jordan. Return airfare from Vancouver is currently quoted at \$1800 on Air Canada.

On August 30th, the pilgrimage of prayer for the ACCC and TAC to Our Lady of Walsingham will gather at Park Place Centre, Wickham, Hants. UK: a Franciscan Pastoral Centre near Portsmouth. The group will attend Mass on the 31st August at St. Agatha's, Portsmouth, and journey on to Our Lady of Walsingham on the 1st September. After the pilgrimage to Walsingham, a very active week, there will be a drive to Ampleforth, a Benedictine

Monastery, for two nights, the 4th and 5th September, then Mass on the 6th September at Aske Chapel, near Richmond, Yorkshire. The final week will be spent at Rydal Hall, a diocesan retreat centre in the heart of the Lake District leaving on the 12th September for the journey home. Cost for the land portion of the pilgrimage is approximately \$1750.00 (subject to exchange rate variations).

Please contact Fr. David Marriott at 604-551-4660, or drm274@hotmail.com for further details.

Claims every Catholic should be able to answer - 11 of 12

Freedom of speech is a great thing. Unfortunately, it comes at an unavoidable price: When citizens are free to say what they want, they'll sometimes use that freedom to say some pretty silly things. And that's the case with the 12 claims we're about to cover. Some of them are made over and over, others are rare (though worth addressing). Either way, while the proponents of these errors are free to promote them, we as Catholics have a duty to respond. These errors are widespread, and it's our responsibility to correct them. So, at long last, I present to you 12 claims EVERY Catholic should be able to answer.

11. "Someone can be pro-choice and Catholic at the same time."

While this may be one of the most common myths Catholics hold regarding their faith, it's also one of the most easily dispelled. The Catechism minces no words when talking about abortion: It's listed with homicide under crimes against the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill."

The following passages make this clear: "Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception". "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable". "Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life".

It can't be stated more plainly than that. Some people might argue, however, that being "pro-choice" doesn't mean being in favor of abortion; lots of people think abortion is wrong but don't

want to force that opinion on others.

There's that "what's true for you might not be true for me" argument again. The Church has an answer to that, too: "'The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin'".

The sanctity of life is a universal truth that can never be ignored. Advising someone to get an abortion, or even voting for a politician who would advance the cause of abortion, is a grave sin, because it leads others to mortal sin - what the Catechism calls giving scandal.

The Church stands forcefully and clearly against abortion, and we as Catholics must take our stand as well.

By **Deal W. Hudson**

From here and there

1) A recent study found that the average American golfer walks about 900 miles a year. Another study found that American golfers drink, on average, 22 gallons of beer a year. That means, on average, American golfers get about **41 miles to the gallon**.

2) **"I Will Go Unto the Altar of God"** The *Classics of Western Spirituality* series of books has one on the great Anglican divine, Jeremy Taylor. One of the articles by him that it contains is called "The Reverence Due to the Altar". In this article, Taylor argues that because the altar is a place where God is specially present (more present than in other places, he says) it is deserving of special reverence. He draws parallels from various biblical stories, such as Jacob at Bethel, Moses and the tabernacle, various Psalms, and more. Places where God is specially present are holy, and are "therefore proper for Divine adoration." The altar, as a symbol of calvary, and the place where the eucharistic sacrifice takes place, is therefore holy, and deserving of reverence. I was taught that you always "reverence" (i.e. bow) to the altar (genuflecting if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved there). **James Gordon Anderson**

3) The first thing a soldier says when asked, "What can we do to make things better for you?" is "We need your support and your prayers."

4) "Try to imagine for one solid year of my life . . . I spent all day comparing Merati & Martinucci & Le Vasseur, to find out where the thurifer ought to stand before the Magnificat, who takes off the bishop's left glove, what sort of bow you should make at the Asperges. I had to look serious, and discuss the arguments for a ductus [swing] duplex or the other thing, whatever it is called, at each candlestick, when you incense the altar. Conceive a man, said to be made in the image of God, spending his time over that kind of thing. Even now that the burden is over it fills me with rage to think of those days. I could have learned a new language easily in the time. I could have gone every day to the cinema. I could have read the complete works of Marie Corelli. My cat was spending his time in sane and reasonable pursuits, chasing birds in the garden, climbing trees, or sleeping in his basket, while I was describing the conduct of the second MC at pontifical Vespers not at the throne. And they affect to believe that we lead a nobler life than the beasts . . ."

From a 1918 typewritten letter of **The Rev. Dr. Adrian Fortescue**, author of "Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described", as provided by the St Edmund's College Archive.

5) Counterfeit Christianity, man-made religion, and revisionist theology must be identified and rebuked for the sake of the unchanging Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Bishop Jack Iker**

Our Beloved Dead - 2 of 7

Let us now go back to our first enquiry. What does the Church teach concerning the condition of the souls of the Faithful Departed?

1) It teaches that the Blessed Dead are alive.

Our Lord Himself taught this to the unbelieving Sadducees who denied spiritual existences, and proved it from the Scripture where God, speaking of the Departed, said, "I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the Living" (St. Mark 12:26-27). He also declared that "Abraham rejoiced to see my day (that is the day of His coming into the world); and he saw it and

was glad" (St. John 8:56).

2) The Church teaches that the Blessed Dead are conscious.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, our Lord says that Lazarus was "comforted," from which it would necessarily follow that he was conscious (St. Luke 16:25). St. Peter tells us that our Lord, between His death and Resurrection "preached unto the spirits in prison," which would have been impossible had not those spirits been possessed of the conscious use of their faculties (I Peter 3:19).

3) The Church teaches that the Blessed Dead still remember conditions on earth.

Our Lord in the same parable we have quoted, narrates that Abraham said to Dives, "Son, remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things and likewise Lazarus evil things." If a lost soul could recall conditions on earth, it were monstrous to suppose that the Blessed Dead should have the memory of their earthly life blotted out. Abraham, in the same parable is described as having a knowledge of what occurred on earth. He knew all about Moses and the prophets, and about Dives' brothers. There can be no doubt in the mind of any man who believes in the Church and the Bible, that his own Holy Dead enjoy a similar knowledge.

4) The Church teaches that the Blessed Dead are acquainted with our present life and needs.

Abraham is showed by our Lord's words to have rejoiced to witness our Lord's entrance upon His human life in this world. The same patriarch is represented by our Lord as knowing of the kind of life that Dives and Lazarus had lived, their needs and their general condition.

The Epistle to the Hebrews describes the saints as being the continual spectators of our life-struggles in this world. The eleventh chapter of this Epistle contains what is substantially the Kalendar of the Saints of the Jewish Church, beginning with righteous Abel, and coming down practically to the author's own day. After narrating their virtues, he goes on to say, "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us . . . run the race that is set before us."

The figure used here is taken from the Roman

athletic games, the spectators on their elevated seats around the great arena, watching the races taking place on the course below. The "cloud of witnesses" are the Saints who have just been enumerated. Even as conservative a commentator as Dean Alford declares that we must conclude "that they who have entered into heavenly rest are conscious of what passes amongst ourselves. Any interpretation short of this leaves the passage without point."

From *Our Beloved Dead*, a booklet by **The Rev. S.C. Hughson, O.H.C.** - published for *The Guild of All Souls* in 1950

TAC in Zimbabwe

My first visit to Zimbabwe was in 1997 or 1998. Of course I am sorry now that I did not keep a diary. I recall I drove uneventfully to the border at Beitbridge and went through with payment of the usual visa cost and compulsory insurance. I was on my way to Bulawayo to visit Fr Francis Day. Canadians of the TAC will already know that this city was where Bishop Mercer was born and that after some education and experiences both bad and good he went back in 1976 [if I have the right year to be the 4th bishop of Matabeleland.

When I went things were quiet and later I even took my sisters to visit there when they came to South Africa to visit me. Fr Day is a kind and thoughtful host. He is busy as a school teacher and a priest at Esigodino. Whether he is able to minister there now I do not know but petrol is not easily obtainable. However, Bulawayo is a pleasant city with wide streets and some fine buildings. The wide streets were laid out by Cecil John Rhodes to allow a team of oxen pulling a cart to turn easily.

Times have changed drastically and now I expect Bulawayo is like the rest of Zimbabwe suffering under the hands of the President who is really a dictator. Robert Mugabe claims to be democratically elected but few outside his own political party believe that. In the not too distant past, Zimbabwe grew its own food and helped to supply other parts of Africa. Now it is a land of starving people with a very high unemployment rate and the highest inflation in the world I think.

The Traditional Anglican Communion is present there because of the labours and forward thinking of a one-time archdeacon of the Church there.

The Rev'd J.W. Ncube-Murinda had heard of continuing Anglicans and cautiously went about finding us in South Africa. He had to be careful in his search since he could not know if the continuing Anglicans he heard of were a genuine Anglican group. He did not want to find us to be in some way deficient. Eventually after some years he was put in touch with Fr Paul Setati who was then and still is one of the priests at All Saints in Seshego in northern South Africa. At the time I was vicar-general of the TAC in Southern Africa and I met Fr. Ncube-Murinda at Fr Setati's home. He wanted to know if we were the genuine article [so to speak] and we had to examine him as well. Each found the other to be what was desired and I put forward my findings to Bishop Trevor Rhodes. He and I went to Zimbabwe and saw for ourselves what had been done in preparation. We found a few congregations and a large Church which was to become the pro-Cathedral for Zimbabwe at the village of Maranganyika. St Patrick's had been built by the people who had made the bricks and baked them in the sun. It is a good solid building suited to the solid Anglican Catholic faith they professed. The Anglican [?] bishop of the area tried to claim the building on several visits but the congregation told him to go away and not return if he valued his car.

As the economic and social situation worsened it became difficult to visit and my last visit in September of 2006 was a hit and miss affair. I did manage to get fuel for the car and see the congregations at Harare and Mutare. In those places there was no church building for us but meeting places were found and I managed to return to South Africa though it was touch and go as I approached the border whether the petrol in the car would allow me to cross. Well, it did and I filled up at the border.

Since my return to Canada I have been concerned about the state of the TAC in Zimbabwe. Fr. Ncube-Murinda had been and still is tireless in moving about and encouraging people. He has three other priests and some fine young men willing to be trained for service in the priesthood. It is difficult.

After the untimely and very sudden death of Bishop Rhodes I decided to send in his memory a gift to the Church and people in Zimbabwe. I asked one of the sons of the vicar-general Fr. Ncube-Murinda by e-mail how to send funds. It has turned out to be quite simple. Go to Western Union and in 20 minutes the money is on the way.

Kevin Murinda [the son who uses only one of the names] goes to the local Western Union and receives the money in US dollars. To shorten the story, after I had told some friends and notably the congregation of St Edmund's of what I had been able to do, help was given and I have been able to send at various times over \$800. I am sure this has kept some people from death by starvation.

At Western Union I had to supply Kevin's name and tell him to go with identification to claim the money. As an added proof of his identity I had to supply a short 4 word question and tell him the answer to give when he collected the money. As an example, I asked where I lived and the answer I gave for him was East York. My last question was about my Canadian postal code. Any false claimant could not know the correct answer. Almost foolproof I think.

Kevin has always spoken of the help given as being life saving and he and the people are grateful to their fellow Anglican Catholics. It is their prayer that the Church there may expand. The vicar-general has done just that. Now there are many congregations in the whole of Zimbabwe as well as in neighbouring Botswana and Mozambique. They are in touch with each other and render valuable encouragement to each other.

By **The Reverend Raymond Ball**

Is Hell Real? - Hell, Yes!

In his March 25 Passion Sunday homily, Pope Benedict XVI declared: "Jesus came to tell us that He wants us all in heaven and that hell - of which so little is said in our time - exists and is eternal for those who close their hearts to His love."

Benedict's comments echo those of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, who in 1999 said hell was "the ultimate consequence of sin itself . . . Rather than a place, hell indicates the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God, the source of all life and joy," while heaven is "neither an abstraction nor a physical place in the clouds, but that fullness of communion with God, which is the goal of human life."

Belief in the reality of hell is essential to a functional understanding of Christianity. Jesus spoke more about hell than He did about heaven. Scriptural authority obligates belief in an eternal hell, without which a doctrine of salvation

becomes nonsensical and irrelevant. "Saved from what?" Without hell, there's no adequate response.

The Apostles' Creed affirms that Christ "descended into Hell" between His crucifixion and resurrection, and the profoundest meaning of this is that He identified himself totally with mankind's alienation from God, and in so doing healed the breach.

However, many modern Christians are troubled by the idea of hell, and wonder how a loving, all-powerful God could allow the existence of eternal torment. This sentiment derives partly from sincere compassion - partly from subversion by humanist philosophy.

Secular humanists, who set the cultural agenda in postmodern Western culture, hate the idea of any sort of personal accountability. In the ethos of modern liberal humanism, hell is a morally offensive concept. Consequently, hell has been pretty much dropped from the lexicon of public discourse, and become just a thoughtless curse-word.

However, American philosopher Richard Weaver argued that "There is bitterness in the thought that there may be no hell, for if there is no hell, there is no justice." That is: if the ultimate reward of evil-doers is exactly the same as that of the virtuous, then morality is reduced to the philistine pragmatism of "What's in it for me right now?", and the capriciousness of temporal fortune is cruel indeed.

This poses a dilemma for contemporary mainline Christians, those seeking to accommodate Christian belief with secular, scientific-materialist concepts of "reality"? If the hell-doctrine is true, shouldn't it be forcefully articulated and taught? After all, at stake is the eternal destiny of human souls. And if there is really no hell, what point is there in preaching the Gospel of salvation or continuing the Church? Fudging this issue is both irresponsible and intellectually dishonest.

The Hebrew Sheol of the Old Testament referred to a place where souls of the dead resided, and implied no moral distinctions. It is in the book of Daniel, written quite late in the Old Testament period (c. 535 B.C.), that a more complex concept of hell begins to emerge: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

In one New Testament usage, the word "hell" (from the Greco-Roman Tartarus) refers to the place where fallen angels were imprisoned to await the final judgment. However, the Greek Gehenna, also translated as hell, derived from the Hebrew name meaning "valley of Hinnom," a deep gorge near Jerusalem where child sacrifices to the pagan god Moloch had been conducted, and where continual fires burned to dispose of the remains. Jesus used the term Gehenna eleven times in the first three Gospels, and this indicates that the association of hell with fire and corporeal torment is allegorical rather than literal.

A "universalist" doctrine that everyone will eventually be saved has emotional appeal, but it simply doesn't square with the Gospel message or with the idea of divine justice. However, cartoonish notions of hell as a literal fiery pit, populated by pitchfork-wielding demons, aren't adequate either.

The concept of hell developed by C.S. Lewis in his novella *The Great Divorce*, and similar theories of other thoughtful theologians, may prove helpful; ie: that hell is a place we choose for ourselves in the afterlife - in continuum with choices made in this life. Eastern Orthodox theologian Kallistos Ware writes: "Self-love is hell; for, carried to its ultimate conclusion, self-love signifies the end of all joy and meaning."

Professor Jerry L. Walls observes in his book, *Hell: The Logic of Damnation*: "The idea that the misery of hell is the intrinsic consequence of choosing to become a certain type of person has a stark realism about it that is often absent when hell is depicted as the supreme torture chamber. It is a dreadful but credible thought that we might come fully to prefer the deformed sense of satisfaction endemic to sin, and that God will finally give us what we want."

Some argue that moral behavior resulting from fear of going to hell is not truly morally motivated. However, this construct only works when hell is perceived as a place of externally imposed punishment. If hell is actually a place where we go because we have come to love sin, then the choice not to go to hell logically derives from repudiating sin.

By choosing sin and rejecting God's love, we also reject joy. As John Milton put it in *Paradise Lost*:

Farewell happy fields where joy for ever
dwells: Hail
horrors hail Infernal world and thou
profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor: one who brings
a mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place; and in it self
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.

Hell is the space where God isn't. In the words of
Christopher Marlowe:

Hell hath no limits nor is circumscrib'd
In one self place, where we are is Hell
And where Hell is, there must we ever be
And to be short, when all the world dissolves
And every creature shall be purified
All places shall be Hell, that are not Heaven

Hell's inmates are not imprisoned by God; its gates
are locked on the inside. St. Isaac the Syrian said:
"It is wrong to imagine that sinners in hell are cut
off from God." God's love is everywhere, even in
hell, and He rejects no one. But we possess the
terrible/wonderful gift of free will, the ability to
accept or reject divine love, which is embodied in
Jesus' completed work of atonement through His
death and resurrection. God honours our
sovereign freedom, and will not force forgiveness
on those who don't think they need to be forgiven.

By **Charles W. Moore**

More on Zambia and Congo

Much has happened since my last report on the
support that we can now give to our churches in
Zambia (CACZ) and Congo (ECAC): and the
most important change is that we can now also
support our church in Zimbabwe with tax-
receipted dollars, when those funds are channeled
through St. Peter & St. Paul, Vancouver.

In Zambia, we have raised funds to build a church
for the parish of the Holy Trinity in Chawama, a
township on the outskirts of Lusaka: this is a
memorial to our late organist at St. Peter & St.
Paul, Russell Savage. We have sent funds to buy
books for the ordinands and clergy. We have
money waiting to be sent to buy materials for a
school and vocation programme at St. Steven's,
Mwembeshi.

In Congo, we have been able, thanks to a very
generous gift, to fund the attendance at seminary

of three ordinands for one year of a three year
course: desperately needed as the faithful in the
pews simply overpower the number of clergy. We
are also able to support the rural clergy with a
small, a very small stipend. We hope to be able to
raise funds from outside the church for social
programmes.

And now, in Zimbabwe, we are able to offer some
support for the clergy there: if we cannot build a
church, and three are needed: they are
worshipping under a tree, just like I saw in Congo
- we can make sure that the clergy are able to have
some food at the end of each day, in an economy
which has endured immense difficulty over the
past years.

There are incredible problems faced by the people
in these churches: please remember them when
you are thinking of your gifts this Christmas:
perhaps there are those on your list who might be
overjoyed to know that rather than a gift, you sent
the money on their behalf to the needs of the
church in Zambia, in Congo, or in Zimbabwe.

We are looking for funds to give clergy a stipend
and to put roofs on churches in Congo, to build
churches, equip schools and educate ordinands in
Zambia, to feed clergy and build churches in
Zimbabwe.

Moneys - all 100% of them - given through your
local parish, and shown on the cheque or envelope
as funds for Africa, will be sent on to the parish of
St. Peter & St. Paul, and directed to the people of
our own church family, in Africa. Please: think of
our needs, in our family, the TAC.

By **Fr. David Marriott SSC**

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