

THE CRUCIFER



NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2007

THE DIOCESE OF THE HOLY CROSS

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FROM THE BISHOP...

Beloved in Christ,

It must have been dreadful watching the Titanic sink. Those who saw it were in the dark, in lifeboats on the cold north Atlantic, or worse, in the water. The sinking Titanic is a metaphor for our Western Civilization. Solzhenitsyn said that the West as a Christian civilization ended in August 1914, when the Russian armies were defeated in WWI, approximately when the Titanic sank. The Church would from now on increasingly assume lifeboat status, embattled against ferocious tyrannies, unprecedented bloodshed and the culture of death. England, and especially the United States, would serve as great reserves of moral capital, put in place by generations of sacrificing Christians, to fight and win WWII, the deadliest war ever fought.

The enemy of souls knew that to completely bring down the Christian West he would have to take out the United States. To do that he would have to take out the Episcopal Church, on whose foundations so much of our country was built. He completely changed his tactics. Instead of pitting the classes or the races against each other, he would pit the sexes against each other. Confusion over sexual identity would erode family life! Christian Fatherhood can become an anachronism! Chesterton had already prophesied that by the end of the 20th century the most radical thing on earth would be Christian Fatherhood.

Thirty years ago, our beloved Church, her prophetic skills blunted by years of affluence, presumption and vague theology, crumbled and buckled and

broke. Watching her go down, listing now 45 degrees to port, her stern rising out of the water, is dreadful. We, in the lifeboats, by God's grace, have now got the boats connected and in good communication with each other.

God is opening up new opportunities for us as He re-shapes the Anglican community. The orthodox Primates, meeting in Tanzania last month, made a stand for biblical truth on one issue. In the next few months the Episcopal Church may well decide to stand apart, as indeed it already is. There will be more, and worse, lawsuits. But there will also be more for us to work with, and more work to do, to help those now jumping ship to see how all the issues we face are connected. All the issues have to do with man's preposterous attempt to re-define human nature apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. A lot of teaching remains to be done on the full extent of this gnosticism and on what the truth is in Jesus. But the teaching will not be in vain, because there are signs that increasing numbers of bishops, clergy and laity now jumping ship are seeing how the issues are interrelated.

There is the beginning of a little groundswell of awareness of the significance not only of biblical morality for sex, marriage and family life but also of the apostolic ministry as instituted by our Lord and embraced by the universal Church, and of the historic Anglican Liturgy. There is a rapidly expanding arena for teaching the Catholic Faith. Regarding our life in Christ, the fathers used to proclaim that "the arena of the virtues has been thrown open!" So too, the arena for teaching the Faith once delivered is being thrown open. It is no coincidence that Anglicans in this country who have been witnessing for over a generation not only to biblical morality but also to apostolic ministry and historic liturgy are now learning to speak with one voice.

In February our Standing Committee applied for membership in the Federation of Anglican Churches in the Americas, which is connected to Forward in Faith through Common Cause. The connections offer us many new opportunities for the common cause of the Gospel, orthodox teaching and the furtherance of cooperation, communication, support, discipline and accountability. Our Diocese is going to be a valuable catalyst in the emergence of a new paradigm for orthodox Anglicans in this Country and beyond. No matter how things shake out we will gain and grow. We are discovering that by thinking, speaking and acting as though that new paradigm was in place, we tend to bring it about. This is the old Anglo-

Saxon way. Do it, then write it down; live it, then put it on paper. We are doing this in the Philadelphia metropolis as the Anglican Fellowship of the Delaware Valley – thinking, speaking and acting as though jurisdictional unity were already in place. The paperwork and structures will follow in their own time. This is an aspect of Kingdom thinking. Our vocation is ultimately not to produce strategies and infrastructure, but saints.

Kingdom thinking is letting the Holy Spirit form in us the mind of Christ, to have the mind of the King, and to begin to see and think and love as He does. St. Paul says that this involves “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor. 10: 5)

The holy Patriarchs Benedict of Rome and Bartholomew of Constantinople are now engaged in dynamic kingdom thinking, paving the way for re-aligned and orthodox Anglicans to find their place in the Church, whose unity the Holy Spirit will reveal. The Holy Spirit is using holy hierarchs in the Church to pull us forward, and He is using the rising tide of Islam to push us from behind. As we learn in the Church to once again speak with one moral voice, we can more effectively be the salt, the leaven and the beacon in what remains of our civilization, to teach that civil law must correspond with God’s moral law, and to re-evangelize our people. Notre Dame does not have to become the Hagia Sophia on the Seine. We can again publicly display the Ten Commandments and Christmas crèches, sing carols and pray in school, bring our children to birth, mark time as B.C. and A.D. and build a culture of life.

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NEWS

New Parishes and Missions

- Brownsville, TX – Church of the Redeemer parish. Fr. George Graydon, Rector; Deacon Carlos Reyes.
- LaJunta, CO – St. Matthew’s mission. Fr. Mark Korbitz.
- Spartanburg, SC – St. Francis of Assisi parish. Bp. Timothy Farmer, Rector; Canon Paul Pritchart; and Deacon Dennis Boan.

- Swartz Creek, MI – St. Bartholomew’s parish. Fr. Gene Geromel, SSC, Rector.
- Westminster, SC – St. John’s mission. Fr. Chip Angell.

Swedish Bishop Visits the Diocese. Early in February, the Rt. Rev. Göran Beijer, one of the bishops of the Mission Province in Sweden and the Vicar of the St. Stephen’s *Koinonia* in Stockholm was in New York to take part in Anders Strindberg’s ordination to the Diaconate in the Missouri Synod. Deacon Anders has a doctorate from St. Andrew’s, Scotland and is a scholar on Middle Eastern politics who lectures and contributes to journals. He hopes to set up a Swedish speaking *koinonia* in New York. Bishop Beijer then went to Transfiguration, Phoenixville, PA, to preach, and then to St. Michael’s, Winchester, for an evening Mass and presentation on the Mission Province, the equivalent in Sweden of our orthodox jurisdictions. It is being helped by the Missouri Synod and by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya. There are close ties with the Nordic Catholic Church in Norway, and an affiliation, like ours, with Forward in Faith/UK.

Originally from Visby, in Gottland, where his father was a priest, Bishop Beijer received his theological degree from the University of Uppsala. The Middle Eastern Council of Churches sponsored his year-long stay in Beirut, Lebanon, to study the Eastern Churches. Most recently he served as Vicar of St. James in the center of Stockholm.

New priest ordained. On Saturday, March 3, the Rev. Peter Anthony Geromel was ordained to the Priesthood at the Church of the Transfiguration in Phoenixville, PA. Members of his family and of his home parish, St. Bartholomew’s, Swartz Creek, MI, attended, including his father, the Rector, the Rev. Dr. Gene Geromel, SSC, and his mother. The Rev. Jason Catania, SSC, Rector of Mt. Calvary, Baltimore, preached. Numerous priests of the Diocese and of the Anglican Fellowship of the Delaware Valley attended, including Bishop David Hicks of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Father Peter, a graduate of Hillsdale College and the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Blue Bell, PA, is the Curate at Transfiguration. Bishop Keith Ackerman, SSC, who confirmed Father Peter, sent his personal greetings.

A Spring Youth Retreat was held Friday, April 20 to Sunday, April 22 at the YMCA Camp Greenville, in the beautiful foothills of South Carolina, for youth aged 12-18. The Retreat ended with 10 a.m. Mass at St. Francis of

Assisi in Spartanburg, and lunch, and was sponsored by the Church of the Epiphany and the Diocese. The theme was the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary, and how the Joyful and Sorrowful Mysteries lead up to them.

Summer Youth Camps

17 – 23 June: Anglican Life Adventure Camp at Elk Shoals UMC Camp in W. Jefferson, NC (www.elkshoals.org), run by the APA/REC, in which DHC has taken part. Contact Tina Jenkins at 704-537-7777 for information.

15 – 21 July: St. Michael's Youth Conference at Manresa Jesuit Retreat Center, Bloomfield Hills, MI (www.manresa-sj.org) Run by FiF, in which DHC has taken part. Contact Erica Murphy at 931-490-7687 for information.

INFORMATION

The *Fortnightly* – Anyone not receiving this bi-monthly e-mail bulletin from the Diocese may request it at afdvl@yahoo.com

The **Training Manual for Permanent Deacons**: Download from the DHC website at www.dioceseoftheholycross.org under Education & Training, or request hardcopy at afdvl@yahoo.com.

To receive the newspaper, *Forward Now in Christ*, send \$35.00 payable to Forward in Faith/NA to P.O. Box 210248, Bedford, TX 76095-7248.

Articles, calendar items or other information for *The Crucifer* may be sent to George Hillard at gob3@charter.net or mailed to 7 Wisteria Way, Whispering Pines, NC 28327-7131

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