



Niagara Anglican

A section of the Anglican Journal

NEWS • PERSPECTIVE • REFLECTION • FOR A GROWING CHURCH • MAY 2011



■ St Paul, Dunville
■ Photo by Sandy Darling

Bishop's Easter Letter



MICHAEL BIRD
BISHOP OF NIAGARA

Susan and I have just returned from our trip to Dar es Salaam in Tanzania where I took part in a very successful set of conversations and meetings with bishops from around the Anglican Communion. A total of six Canadian bishops met with ten bishops from Africa, two from the United States and one from England, as we continued the work begun last year in London to explore and affirm our desire to journey and work together. We committed ourselves to a deep desire to remain open to each other as partners in furthering God's mission for our Church and for the world in the face of differences that exist in our context for ministry and our theological understandings.

I hope you will read the communiqué that was written and agreed upon by all in attendance that we now have

available on our website. We are also planning an evening at our Cathedral that will give me an opportunity to talk more fully about the experience we had, not just at the meetings but also our encounters with the harsher realities of life in this part of the world. Susan had a number of contacts with members of the Mother's Union in the diocese there and will be speaking to groups who are interested in hearing more about her perspective on our visit.

Those of you who have had the experience of encountering the degree of poverty and hardship that exists in places like this around the world will know the difficulty that we experienced in trying to reflect upon, and come to terms with, all that we witnessed in those slums and communities. It was very tempting for us to come home and to run away from those images as we immersed ourselves back into the hectic and busy life that we lead. It would not be difficult to allow that experience to overwhelm us and it would be easy to convince ourselves that the challenges these people face are too great and that nothing can be done.

I will try, nevertheless, to keep those images with me throughout the season of Lent and as I move through Holy Week. I want to try to imagine standing just as the sun was rising in that dark and empty cave into which the body of Jesus had been placed. I want to try to imagine the emptiness in the hearts of the disciples as they stood in that empty tomb and were now themselves beginning to resist the temptation of running and hiding away.

Maybe you can recall a moment in your own past when everything that gave meaning and joy to your life seemed suddenly to have been taken away: a moment of total bereavement.

Can we imagine the darkness of this one moment being expanded to encompass the whole earth, the whole of humanity? At one point when I stood in a pathetic stone hovel in Dar es Salaam and prayed with a man who was dying of AIDS that was exactly what it seemed like to me!

Those of us who will gather for the Easter Vigil service, however, will witness a new flame being carried into a darkened church.

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The Resurrection

Source and summit of our spirituality

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

Easter is a feast in the life of the church which although lip-service is paid to its importance, honestly takes second place to the feast of the Incarnation of Christ commonly called Christmas. There's nothing wrong with the celebration of Christmas as such an important part of our lives, but in some ways it somewhat distances us from the challenges of faith that confront us in every direction and place in our lives.

Recently in our family a new infant joined our ranks. It's amazing how we

are drawn to a newborn. We all smile and admire the miracle before us. There is something very gratifying about our relationship to newborns. It thrusts us into another world and somehow we forget all the cares and worries that envelop us in everyday living. At the end of the day though, we all realize that we must go back to facing the challenges of living as an adult in an adult world. Christmas is the feast of an infant for most of us and Easter is the feast of the greatest challenge to our intellects that we will ever face—the Resurrection of a crucified and dead Christ.

This isn't the time and place to discuss the nature of the Resurrection because there are many views and each of them is precisely that—a view from a particular perspective. The great scrip-

ture scholar Eugene LaVerdiere who died in 2008, once said in my presence, that if he went to the holy land and there discovered the authentic tomb of Christ and rolled the stone aside only to find bones wrapped in a white cloth, his faith in the Resurrection would not be altered in any way. So much for arguments about whether or not Christ physically rose from the dead... it simply doesn't matter. He is Risen and we who are Christians know it.

I used to belong to an order of Priests and Brothers known as the Congregation of the Resurrection. These are hard-working religious who live their vowed life based on the Resurrection of Christ.

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A new neighbour brings new life

SUE-ANN WARD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HARRRP
VICAR OF CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

In HARRRP's first weeks at St. Peter's Hamilton, we met a neighbour named Steve Calverly. Steve participated in a "Create Your Community Centre" meeting that HARRRP held at St. Peter's to get input from neighbourhood residents regarding their dreams for their new community centre, and became involved in programs and activities at the community centre. He learned that one of the goals that HARRRP has for St. Peter's is that it become as beautiful and functional a community gathering space as we can possibly make it.

Since November, we have been working to make each area of the building more flexible in terms of potential usage, while retaining all of the building's atmosphere and beauty. We have unscrewed the pews from the floor in the nave and chapel so that they can be reconfigured as required. We have removed excess building materials that were being stored in the loft so that it can be used as an artists' studio. We have painted walls, hung artwork by local artists, and replaced poorly functioning toilets.

Furnishings, plaques, memorials, and other precious items remain in their places of honour. All of the historical documents, vestry books, registers, photos, slides, and files have been carefully organized and secured. The organ is in good condition and is being used by the symphony and by some local organists. Flowering plants are thriving throughout the building.

After getting to know us, learning about our mission and vision, and seeing us in action, Steve decided he liked what we were up to in his neighbourhood and he wanted to contribute. Steve spoke to his professor in the Building and Construction Sciences program at Mohawk College about the possibility of some of the Mohawk students helping HARRRP out with the renovations. Steve and I toured Brad MacDonald though the church building pointing out items on our wish list. A week later, Brad brought

two other teachers from Mohawk College through St. Peter's so that they could confer about what they and their students could accomplish in a five day period.

At 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 14, more than thirty students and three members of the faculty arrived at St. Peter's with a trailer full of equipment. After a tour of the building, teams of student got down to work taking up stained and worn carpets and curling laminate tiles, making brackets to reinforce pews, and heightening railings that needed to be brought up to code. Each day, thirty to forty 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students spent eight hours working on our various restoration and renovation projects.

In five days...

1. Materials were purchased and transported to the site.
2. Green carpet was removed from the volunteer office and hardwood flooring installed. Baseboards, quarter round, two door frames and one window frame were installed. Two doors were shortened to accommodate the increased height of the floor.
3. Orange carpet was removed from the coat room and cream 13 x 13 ceramic tiles were laid. Baseboards were installed. Two new doors were put on a cupboard, and pipes were boxed in.
4. Laminate tiles were taken up from the floor in the computer lab. The floor was prepared and then ceramic tile was laid. Eight cupboard doors were replaced.
5. A hole in the wall of the hallway outside the kitchen was fixed.
6. A railing was constructed out of a modesty panel.
7. The ceiling of the hallway outside the sacristy was repaired where plaster was missing due to water damage.
8. The height of the railing of the loft was increased.
9. The floor in the loft was repaired.
10. The carpet runner down the centre of the nave was taken up, the glued under pad was scraped up, and wood was treated.
11. The risers in the chancel were removed. Wood from the risers was used to complete the flooring in the location where the risers had been.

Modesty panels were used to complete the woodwork needed to cover the stone wall exposed when the risers were removed. Long double pews were shortened and reinforced. The front of the organ was repaired and decorative wood moulding was added.

12. More than fifty pews were reinforced to ensure that when they are moved, they will not be damaged. The new reinforcing brackets were stained.

13. The floor in a small washroom was levelled.

14. Two loads of debris were taken to the dump.

15. The space was cleaned.

What is it worth?

- 30 students x 40 hours x \$12/hr = \$14,400
- 5 faculty x 60 hours x \$50/hr = \$15,000
- Donated materials: \$1,782 in hardwood flooring, \$900 in ceramic tile, \$500 other (trim, cupboard doors, hardware, screws, etc.)
- Equipment rental: \$1,500
- **Total: \$34,082**

- Learning
- Relationships
- Functionality, safety, and beauty of the building
- Promotion (front page article in the *Hamilton Spectator*, photos in *SNAP* newspaper, and an article on the Mohawk College blog)
- **Total: Priceless**

Brad MacDonald and the other faculty members coordinated all of this in an impressive manner. They made a hugely complicated project seem effortless. The students were prepared, equipped, supervised, educated, and inspired. The gift of their time, enthusiasm, skill, creativity, and hard work poured new life into the St. Peter's building. As a result, it is more functional, inviting, safe, and beautiful. We will use it to nurture possibility, opportunity, and community among the children of God in that part of Hamilton.

Thank you to Steve Calverly for being so welcoming to his new neighbours.

Bishop's Easter Letter

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

For me it will be a powerful sign of new light that enters into the darkness and emptiness that I will have carried with me from my visit to those slums. Into that moment of emptiness and despair a flicker of light will begin to shine; a small but bright beam that will begin to push back that darkness and the first glimmer of new hope and renewed life will find a way to break through.

On Easter Sunday morning we will hear in our Gospel reading that very early, at dawn, as the sun was just beginning to come over the horizon, the discovery was made! Jesus Christ was raised from the dead! God did not, nor will not, allow the darkness of this world to have the final say; not even death itself and the more that news, that incredible, miraculous, life-changing news began to be taken in and acted upon, the more the light of God's love would shine. It is the

good news of Easter that allows us to continue to live our lives despite the brokenness that confronts us and sometimes paralyzes us. The Easter dawn gives us the hope and courage to be the bearers of the light of the risen Christ for the people God calls us to serve.

May God bless you as you celebrate and rejoice in the gift and the glory of this wonderful news: Christ is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

My change of heart during the Egyptian revolution



MICHAEL BURSLEM
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

As a Brit I've never before been a revolutionary. Revolution just isn't in our vocabulary. Our American friends, as we might expect, were all *gung ho* on it from the start. My sympathies were entirely with Mr. Mubarak, who had served his country well in the Air Force, then as Vice-President under President Sadat, and then as President for 30 years, a total of 60 years. Because President Sadat had been assassinated I thought the emergency laws were a necessary part of Egyptian politics. The country would be ungovernable without them. So when the Egyptian young people started to rally in Tahrir Square on January 25th, to demand the overthrow of the government I thought they were an infernal nuisance. How could they disrupt the traffic through the square and restrict people from getting to their work down town, and not expect the government to dislodge them? I had very little sympathy for them, even after live rounds had been used. I was sorry that some had to be killed, but thought that if they had stayed home they wouldn't have got shot.

Well, that was before I started to look into the causes of the revolution more deeply. There were five main factors:

- Emergency laws:
- Police brutality:
- Blatant corruption in high places:
- Unemployment:

■ High cost of food and housing due to inflation.

Egypt has operated under a 'state of emergency' since the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, for all but 18 months in 1980/81. It was reinstated after the assassination of president Sadat and emergency laws had continued in effect ever since. They allowed the president to outlaw demonstrations, hold detainees indefinitely without trial, and issue law by decree. Generally, emergency law provides the government with the authority to control every level of political activity. Under Emergency Law the people feared the police, rather than respected them, as the police brutally enforced the law (and became a law unto itself), as in the case of Khalid Said.

Said was a young businessman in Alexandria. On the evening of June 10, 2010, he was apprehended and beaten up outside an internet café. The police claimed that he had swallowed a joint of hashish when he saw the security forces coming and choked to death. His family were informed of his death, but were not allowed to see the body for obvious reasons (See *Human Rights Now*, <http://blog.amnestyusa.org/iar/egypt-stand-up-for-khalid-said>, but if you're squeamish, don't). The family thought he was targeted because he was about to release a video that he had obtained from friends showing Egyptian police dividing up spoils of a drug bust. They persisted and found the body in a morgue. His brother took a photo of it and posted it on the internet. From there it got into Facebook *Kullina Khalid Said—We're all Khalid Said*. Paul-Gordon Chandler, our rector in Maadi, whom I have introduced you to before, said that in his eight years in

Cairo there have been many such Khalid Sais.

The blatant corruption in high places only came to my knowledge during the revolution. Mr. Mubarak, his family, and his senior ministers had sucked billions, not just millions, from the public treasury. They needed to learn that democracy isn't just having elections; public servants aren't pharaohs or pashas, but servants, and should be paid as such.

Youth unemployment is universal, but in Egypt it is higher in the educated classes, so it doesn't pay to go to university. The way ahead was by whom you knew, not through skill or hard work.

High food prices are also universal. In the West we can absorb the increases, but in developing countries they can't. Over half the population can't afford to buy meat. I used to think that this was the chief cause of the revolution until Paul-Gordon told me otherwise.

During the revolution we just sat tight in our apartment and watched it all unfold on TV. It was a bit scary because the government withdrew all the police from the streets and released all prisoners in the jails in order to produce mayhem which they could blame on the young people. For a few days it wasn't safe to go out, as the prisoners were looting stores and trying to break into several apartments. They torched the Carrefours shopping centre not too far from us. They were armed somehow and the sound of gunshot was common. People became very nervous and many friends were evacuated. Mohammed, our landlord escorted us to the local grocery to buy necessities, but stocks were very low. He had a loaded revolver. He and

other young people formed a squad of vigilantes that protected our neighbourhood each night after the curfew. Most were armed with only sticks and knives. In our neighbourhood they caught eight prisoners and gave them pretty rough justice. Groups like that were formed all over the country. There was no law and order. That was restored only by the army, and one evening a tank rolled by under our window, cheered on by our sturdy vigilantes.

The chief outcome of the revolution surprised everybody. Not only did Mr. Mubarak leave the presidential palace on February 11, and the army take over and the country went berserk with euphoria—that was all to be expected—but what happened in the square during and after the revolution was not. The impossible happened. Muslims and Christians were seen praying together. After the revolution, when the public stormed the State Security Intelligence building, the *Bastille* of the former government, a controversial document was found proposing an attack on a Coptic church. Could that church have been Saint Mark's and Saint Peter's in Alexandria, that was bombed on New Year Eve leaving 23 people dead and more than 90 wounded? Before, such sectarian violence had divided Copts and Muslims, but the revolution brought them together. There were numerous signs made in the square and painted all over the country showing the cross and the crescent. On a major highway near us there was a huge billboard with the Egyptian flag with the words "One Blood, One People." Signs like this began to appear after the church bombing, but they proliferated remarkably after the revolution.

The other amazing result of the revolution was that young people, Muslim and Christian working side by side, cleaned up the mess in the square, but didn't just stop there. They fanned out around the country. They swept the streets, painted the curbs, and did a general spring clean. They painted almost every wall they could find with the Egyptian colors, red white and black, with lots of crosses and crescents side by side.

But what of the future? I'm not so pessimistic as some by seeing the Muslim Brotherhood in the square. The Friday after the government fell, Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an influential Sunni cleric and an outlawed member of the Muslim Brotherhood, spoke to the crowd in the square. This was his first public sermon in Egypt in 50 years, having been expelled all that time. He began by paying tribute to those who had died, Christian and Muslim. That was a moving experience. As one letter writer from London to the *Al Ahram* weekly paper wrote, "The Brotherhood may not be the perfect party...for everyone, but the unwarranted demonizing of the group by non-Egyptians is a great dis-service to the whole of Egypt. We have witnessed great solidarity between Christians and Muslims during the anti-Mubarak protests, which shows that Egyptians, if left to their own devices, can live together without serious secular tensions."

What really confirmed to me that I had become a revolutionary was an article my wife read in *Rosaryusef*, an Egyptian *MacLeans*, by Ahmed abd elHameed elNaggar. In it he stated, "I saw God in Tahrir Square. I saw the God I know. Freedom, Justice, Peace and Love." I did too. It still gives me goose bumps.



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Supporting Justice and Ministry | Hands Across Niagara



MICHAEL THOMPSON
RECTOR, ST JUDE'S OAKVILLE

On June 5, anticipating the Feast of Pentecost the following Sunday, churches throughout the diocese will launch the first annual "Hands Across Niagara" campaign to provide a vehicle for generous support of justice and servant ministries and partnerships in this part of God's world.

Hands Across Niagara is all about partnerships that change the world—partnership with the national "Anglican Appeal" in its commitment to the mission of God in Canada and throughout the Anglican Communion, partnerships with

local and regional agencies and organizations committed to service and advocacy, and partnerships among Anglican congregations and local ministries to work for change in their own context.

The funds that we contribute as generous stewards of God's abundance will be allocated equally—one-third each—to these three forms of partnership. Anglican Appeal will receive one-third to support ministries, in Canada and overseas, that serve God's transforming mission. For its part, Anglican Appeal will discontinue direct advertising within the diocese. That means that "Hands Across Niagara" is now the vehicle through which Anglican Appeal will reach out to Niagara Anglicans for financial support.

The Diocese will allocate one-third of the funds on the basis of applications from Anglicans engaging in

partnership with agencies and organizations already active in serving and advocacy, with a focus on four areas: *Food security* for all people, *care and support* for children as they grow and develop, adequate *shelter* for those who lack it, and *"eco-justice"*—justice for the earth (ecological justice) and for persons and communities (economic justice).

These four areas of focus for justice and servant partnerships are rooted in the witness of scripture, beginning with God's first mandate to the first human—to till the earth and keep it. The framework of order and justice that the law and the prophets describe give historic shape to human faithfulness, and Jesus—his life and witness, death and resurrection—redeems a people for new life in a new world. "For if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation". For Christians, the promise of tomorrow is already

present in the struggle of today. At the same time, as we live within that promise, we help it find expression in our work and witness.

So if we think of "food security", we might remember our ancestors and the manna God provided, manna that went rancid if any tried to hoard it, or of any of the bible stories in which the sharing of food renders it abundant in the face of apparent scarcity. The widow of Zarahapheth (1 Kings 17) comes to mind, and all the feeding stories of Jesus' ministry. If we think of care and support for children, we might remember that for Jesus they were holy persons, gifted with unique awareness and attentiveness to God and God's kingdom. If we think of shelter, we might remember that to share our shelter with the homeless poor is the fast that God demands of us in Isaiah 58. And we might hear the rumble

of the prophet Amos' words—that our songs are noise and our solemn feasts devoid of any meaning before God until they find expression in justice.

Finally, one-third of the money contributed by the members of a parish will be returned to that parish for local purposes at that parish's discretion. We hope that new ministries and cooperation with other parishes might be part of how this money goes to work to make a difference in the world.

Hands Across Niagara will give the people of this diocese an avenue for generosity, generosity that will make a difference in the lives of other people—of people who are hungry, of children as they grow and develop, of those who seek the warmth and safety of shelter, of those who suffer injustice, and in the life of the earth itself.

Celebrating ten years of full communion



PETER WALL
DEAN, RECTOR CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL
CO-CHAIR OF JOINT ANGLICAN LUTHERAN
COMMISSION

Many readers will remember the late spring of 2001, when, in Waterloo, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada both proclaimed *The Waterloo Declaration* and formally began a relationship which had been carefully developed and nurtured for many years and which has, in the decade since, deepened and flourished.

This year, indeed in these very days, two very important events have taken place which both celebrate and bear witness to this special relationship. Early in April, the two national executive bodies of our two churches—The National Church Council (ELCIC) and the Council of

General Synod (ACC) met together over four days at a retreat centre in Mississauga. This joint meeting, comprising about 70 people—elected representatives, staff, and guests—worshipped, prayed, dined, socialized, and worked together. While each body met separately in order to carry out their necessary legislative work, much of the time was devoted to *being together*—getting to know each other, learning about each other's churches, home congregations, dioceses, and synods, and about issues, concerns, and opportunities facing both of meetings and our worship, and a special commemorative tree was planted on the grounds of Queen of Apostles Retreat Centre, reflecting the meeting's theme *'Growing Together'*.

As well as being the tenth anniversary year of the signing of *The Waterloo Declaration*, this year also marks the tenth anniversary of *Called to Common Mission*, the document which brought full communion to our American brothers and sisters—*The Episcopal Church and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. As part of the recognition of that

anniversary, and in response to conversations which have taken place between our four church leaders, two celebratory Eucharists are taking place on Sunday, May 1, one in Buffalo, NY and one in our own Diocese—at St. Paul's, Fort Erie. At the Buffalo service, taking place in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Presiding Bishop Mark Hansen of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* will preside and Primate Fred Hiltz of *The Anglican Church of Canada* will preach. In Fort Erie, National Bishop Susan Johnson of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada will preside and Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori of The Episcopal Church will preach. It will be an historic event—two services, two countries, four churches, four national church leaders—taking place at the same time on either side of an international border. We are greatly privileged in Niagara to have Bishop Jefferts Schori and Bishop Johnson in our midst; Bishop Bird and Bishop Pryse will also be taking part.

Our full communion relationship with the ELCIC is one of the highlights of this young century for our

church. It is one which enlivens both churches, and one in which unity of the church of God is glimpsed and cherished. It has meant a huge amount to me and my own ministry, and has become a strong part of our Diocesan life as well. *Full communion* is a relationship which is distinctive and deeper than the many other ecumenical relationships which we share. In our full communion relationship, we recognized each other's ministries and we commit ourselves to an share and honour in those ministries; hence, Anglican Priests and Deacons serve Lutheran parishes; Lutheran pastors service Anglican parishes; those qualified for nomination as Bishop in one of our churches may be nominated in either of our churches; indeed, this has happened already in our country. We value and use each other's liturgical materials and so, subject to the local authority of local bishops, the wealth of liturgical materials in *both* of our churches can be used by us all. We appoint 'partners' to each others' committees and boards and, since 2001, have had a Lutheran member of the (Anglican) Council of General Synod and an Anglican member of the

(Lutheran) National Church Council. Since 2007, each of those positions has had both voice *and* vote.

We committed ourselves, in 2001, to having a *Joint Commission*, with representatives from both churches and co-chairs from each church, along with ecumenical and international partners. This Commission is now in its second generation since 2011, and is looking forward at the *Joint National Convention/General Synod* in 2013 to presenting both churches with exciting and bold new commitments to take us through the next decade or so.

So, meanwhile, why not take a carload of folks to the special joint service of celebration and witness at St. Paul's Fort Erie (or at Holy Trinity Lutheran in downtown Buffalo) on Sunday afternoon, May 1 at 3:00 p.m. If this cannot happen for you, then organize, sometime during this year, a special celebration in your parish with your Lutheran neighbours. All of the liturgical material being used on May 1 can be found on-line on our diocesan web-site.

Alone we can go faster; but together we can go further!

May it be so!

Advertise in the Niagara Anglican!

The June issue of the Niagara Anglican will be the last issue before the summer hiatus – we'll be back in September.

Our June issue is an ideal vehicle to advertise your special summer and fall events to the more than 13,000 subscribers in the greater Niagara Region.

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Mothering Sunday

Alive and well in Rockwood

HOLLIS HISCOCK
 INTERIM PASTOR, ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
 ROCKWOOD

In 1966, the first Mothering Sunday worship was instituted in St. John's Church, Rockwood. On April 3, 2011, the people continued the custom for the 45th year. Similar to earlier occasions, flowers were blessed and distributed by the children to all females attending worship, and delivered to others unable to be present due to illness. Two Simnel cakes were also blessed and shared by everybody during the fellowship time after the worship.

Mothering Sunday has its roots in the Middle Ages of English society, when 'women in service' were given the day off to visit their mothers and bring a sweet biscuit called Simnel Cake. Later, Cathedrals became the focus of Mothering Sunday, with people making a pilgrimage or visit to the Cathedral or Mother Church of a diocese. Its origin is often traced to the reference in Paul's letter to the Galatians (4:26) found in the Bible's

New Testament, where Jerusalem is referred to as 'mother of us all'.

Barbara Smiley described Mothering Sunday at St. John's Rockwood Church in a brief history published for the centennial of its consecration on June 7, 1985. She wrote, "The long winter months, often difficult ones for the congregation of a country church, with snow and ice to be negotiated, are brightened by the traditional Mothering Sunday service which takes place in Lent. It is the forerunner of the modern Mother's Day but totally unlike it in spirit. Children make an effort to be present at this service, not only those living at home but also the ones who are scattered at college, university or in their own homes. It is a simple but very moving ceremony, children go up to the altar to receive flowers which they then give to all the mothers in the congregation as a token of love and thanks. Afterwards the traditional Simnel Cake is served. The rich fruit cakes, covered and decorated with almond paste are a symbol of plenty."

Mothering Sunday may have been replaced by Mother's Day in most areas of Canadian society, but, at the little Anglican Church on the hill in Rockwood, Ontario, the tradition continues.

The Resurrection

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Distilled from their faith in the Resurrection is their Charism. It makes a few good points for all of us who are followers of that same Christ.

God's love for us is merciful and unfailing. True enough, the Resurrection of Christ teaches us that no matter how difficult our journey, no matter how much evil we encounter in life—God's love will always win. It was so for Jesus of Nazareth and it will be so for each of us. A good thought to carry in our day to day living.

God calls us to conversion. If we look at our behaviour honestly in daily life, we understand that so much of what we say and do is not consistent with what Jesus taught. In order to remain open to the abiding love of God—a love that conquers all that is wrong in life, we must always live our lives in conversion mode. That means daily, as people who believe in the Resurrection, we must open our hearts to change and growth and not assume that we alone have the answer or know the way.

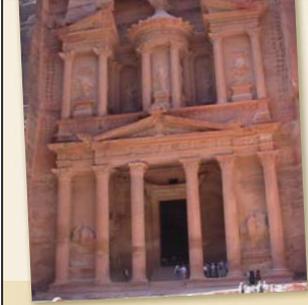
God invites us to live together as brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. After the death Christ, we can

imagine how the disciples must have scattered and argued and perhaps even lost faith. There are various references to this in the post-resurrection narratives in the scriptures. The story of Emmaus in particular reminds us of how essential it is to break bread and share the cup of salvation in order for us to profess our brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ. We must constantly avoid the temptation of division and instead open ourselves to living in love with all those who cross the paths of our lives.

God calls us to work together for the Resurrection of Society. This is the most important point. All of the previous points lead to it. Once we recognize God's love, God's call to conversion, God's call to live as sisters and brothers in Christ, then it is important for us to work toward the Resurrection of Society. In previous editions of this paper, we have been stressing the call for the church to grow in its sense of justice and our responsibility to live justice every moment of our lives. A just and loving world is a world that is living the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This issue contains an article by Colleen

Sym which invites us to consider the depths of Justice in our church. It's not just about imposing our gifts of graciousness upon the disadvantaged, but it is about making the decision to walk with them and opening ourselves to letting them walk with us in the pilgrimage of life toward God and toward a just society. The Bishop in his Easter Letter in this paper, having spent time in Africa with the poorest of people, has experienced a society that needs the Resurrection and prays with us that this Easter will bring light in the darkness and hope for renewed life in our world. Michael Burslem in this issue tells us of his powerful and dark experience in Egypt throughout the revolution and brings to us a call for a profound Resurrection of Society.

Easter is at the heart of who we are and who we are called to be. It calls us to a life that is more than we can ask or imagine. I hope and pray that on the last day I can say along with the church, that it is the Risen Christ that has guided me in my day to day life and has helped me to be who I am and helped me to create the 'resurrected' world that God wants for us.

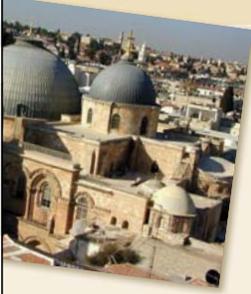


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Straight talk about giving



JIM NEWMAN
STEWARDSHIP CONSULTANT

A distant relative passed away a few weeks ago at the age of 92. He was a cradle Anglican who attended the same parish church for close to 90 years. He was buried from that church—the same church where at the age of 100 his mother was still a contributing member. His obituary read in part, “Memorial donations may be made to the Salvation Army”.

Perhaps the lesson here is that the Salvation Army creates a simple and effective mission statement that people understand. It’s one picture—“the poor” and it says, “We look after the poor in the name of Christ.” Other key words and phrases from their web site are equally effective—Giving Hope; Restoring Pride; the Dignity Project; The Empty Bowl project. The generous response to their appeals far exceeds that of any other charity.

Anglican complexities

Unlike the Salvation Army, the Anglican description of mission is complex. Currently it reads in part like this, “Canadian Anglicans participate in God’s mission in the world. We work with ecumenical, interfaith, and Anglican partners in Canada and internationally. We address issues of climate change, healing and reconciliation, theological education, Indigenous justice, housing and homelessness, and more. The Partners in Mission and Ecojustice Committee (PMEJ) oversees and helps to facilitate this work.”

Our language about supporting mission is complex too. We call it stewardship and while I like that word, difficulties abound. We say that Christian stewardship is about a way of life. If the

moment is right we even say we don’t own anything; that all we have been entrusted to us by God. And we are to manage these resources according to God’s purposes at the same time as we’re trusting God with all that we are. We say that stewardship is not paying the bills or keeping the church afloat, it’s about our relationship with God.

But the real pictures we create can be negative, misinterpreted, or inaccurately expressed. An envelope arriving in the mail from the church may trigger the thought, “Here they go again—the church is asking for more money”. Some refer to support of our Diocese and the national church mission work as a “tax”, and call for a reduction. How tragic!

We’re rich in resources

Before I go on let me say that all gifts to all levels of the church are sincerely appreciated. There are many, many people who give generously of their time, talent and treasure, and much wonderful mission work is carried out by dedicated clergy, staff and volunteers across this diocese and beyond.

But this Diocese is rich in resources, particularly when compared to so much of the world, and frankly, the Diocese and Anglican churches of Niagara *should* be asking for more money for God’s mission. The need is so great in our local communities, in the north, and around the world. Despite our overall good fortune in Niagara, a colleague at the national church tells me that Prince Edward Island recently topped Newfoundland as first on the list of most generous “givers” in the country. In Niagara we may be declining in numbers but our average incomes are strong; yet we are only typical givers. Why couldn’t and shouldn’t we be leading the list?

Anglicans as givers

An average Anglican household in Niagara gives about \$950 or 1.9% of annual household income to its parish. Col-

lectively Anglican households in Niagara earn about \$900,000,000 (18,000 Anglican households x \$50,000 household income per year) annually, and give about \$17,000,000 (\$900,000,000 x 1.9%) annually to their parishes. Significant concern is expressed about the amount of parish revenue which is remitted to the Diocese, but is it really too high? It is often quoted as 30%-32% of parish income, but after normal deductions it’s actually about 17% net. And so 17% of \$17,000,000 or about \$2.9 million forms roughly the total amount of our diocesan budget.

Where does the money go?

About \$160 of the average household’s annual donation of \$950 goes to support ministry at the diocese and national church—a little more than \$3 per week. A few rounds of golf quickly eats-up the \$160 is about 22% or \$35 per year. Just enough for one case of beer and some potato chips. Perhaps that explains why Niagara has not been able to pay its full apportionment to the national church for years; even though we know that clergy in Canada’s north are paid little if at all.

The impact of reducing the DMM rate

For that average household in Niagara a reduction of 1% of the net DMM rate equates to an additional \$9.50 (\$950 average annual giving x 1%) annually being retained in the parish. For a 200 household parish, the additional amount retained would be \$1,900 annually—not a significant saving for a parish in financial difficulty. Overall the impact on the Diocese would be a revenue reduction of about \$29,000 (\$2,900,000 budget x 1%). The impact on the national church would be a further reduction in our annual apportionment.

To complete the picture, it should be noted that for the past two years the Diocese offered DMM rebates of up to \$5000 per year to parishes, yet only 13

parishes applied for the rebate in 2009 and 12 in 2010.

Toward real solutions

A reduction in DMM rates provides little in the way of financial relief for parishes, and it further constricts the important work of the Diocese and the national church.

The struggle to balance the Diocesan budget’s expenses consumes innumerable hours, yet little time goes into considering what would be realistic levels of revenue—for both the Diocese and parishes. A comprehensive increase in giving, even a modest increase, would provide a remarkable turn-around. Here are some examples based on increased annual giving by all givers in a 200 household parish:

Increase from 1.9% to 2.0% (e.g. from \$950 to \$1000)

Additional parish revenue \$10,000 (\$1000-\$950 x 200 households)

Increase from 1.9% to 2.2% (e.g. from \$950 to \$1100)

Additional parish revenue **\$30,000**

Increase from 1.9% to 2.5% (e.g. from \$950 to \$1250)

Additional parish revenue **\$60,000**

Compare those numbers to status quo giving and the \$1900 “saved” by a 1% reduction in DMM!

The remarkable impact of giving on DMM

Of course additional parish revenue would result in an increase in parish DMM. But calculations based on the examples above show the DMM rate could drop from the current rate of 17% to 16% (17% of \$190,000 parish income vs. 16% of \$200,000 parish income) in example 1, to 14.5% in example 2, and to 13% in example 3 while still realizing practically the same revenue stream to the Diocese. Just think what could happen if Anglicans were really generous!

The Niagara Anglican

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Editor: Christopher Grabiec

Phone: 905-628-6010 (ext 101)

Advertising: Colin Jacobs

Phone: 905-526-0154

Publishers Advisory Board

Pam Claridge
Phone: 519-941-6804

Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis
Phone: 905-628-4176

Charles Stirling
Phone: 905-383-1088

Carol Summers
Phone: 905-772-5641

Staff

Proofreading: Bryan Stopps

Submissions

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The Diocese of Niagara

The Diocese lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, and is defined roughly by the Niagara Escarpment from the Niagara River in the east to the Dundas Valley in the West and north to Shelburne, Mt. Forest and Orangeville.

Bishop of Niagara: Michael A. Bird

Phone: 905-527-1316

Administrative Assistant: Alison D’Atti

Phone: 905-527-1316 (ext 310)

Executive Officer: Michael Patterson

Phone: 905-527-1316

Congregational Support and Development

Christyn Perkins
Phone: 905-527-1316 (ext 460)

Contact the Diocese

Cathedral Place
252 James St. North
Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3
Phone: 905-527-1316
Website: www.niagara.anglican.ca

If one of us is diminished we are all diminished



GRAHAME STAP
RECTOR, ST SIMON, TEMAGAMI

During my time with Sharp electronics I visited Japan many times. I have traveled in the area where the tsunami washed away everything in its path and the nuclear reactors spew radioactivity. Watching the pictures on the news I cannot believe the destruction of this once beautiful country and I suspect some of the people I met died on that terrible day when the wave hit.

I guess this is one of those times when we ask, “Where is God? How can God let this happen”? It is strange; most Japanese would never ask that

question as for most God does not exist. Immortality comes from what is accomplished in life that will be revered by future generations. This makes the tragedy even more devastating because what has been accomplished was washed away nothing is left for those still to come.

I know deep sadness fills the hearts of those left behind; a great sense of helplessness overwhelms them and yet the resilience and courage of the ordinary people of Japan will just make them all the more determined to rebuild. They will work together helping each other in ways that stretch the imagination of those of us living in the west.

Under normal circumstances there are no food banks in Japan. All people have enough to eat. Large companies find ways to give all people work even if, to us, it seems to be the equivalent

of a Western make work program. It allows dignity and takes away the sense of accepting charity.

Here in Canada nine hundred thousand people use food banks every year and feel that overpowering sense of helplessness that comes when one loses dignity.

Our government talks about corporate tax reduction. They say it will cause large companies to hire more staff. We forget that when the royal bank first announced a profit on one billion dollars they laid off three thousand people to accomplish this.

Perhaps we need to take a leaf from the Japanese and try to understand true success and profitability only comes if we all share with all people so we can all lift our heads and feel a sense of dignity.

This is the time to ask the leaders of our political parties what they

intend to do to end the need for food banks in Canada and tell then if they want our vote they must strive to allow all people of this great land the dignity we all want.

Perhaps our greatest sin is that of indifference to the plight of others. The letter of James says, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself if it has no works is dead”.

The people of Japan, for the most part, are not Christian yet they seem to understand that if one of us is diminished we are all diminished and that if one person loses their dignity the dignity of us all is lessened.

If we truly believe that God loves all things God created and Jesus came for the poor, the sick, and the lonely can we, as Christians, do less?

As always it is only my opinion.

BOOK REVIEWS

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life

JOAN BOTHWELL
ST CHRISTOPHER BURLINGTON

I've just read a book that should help us all! Twelve steps to a Compassionate Life (2010) by Karen Armstrong. She has written books on the history of God, Islam, and Buddha. This one is not long and difficult to follow. I think of myself as compassionate—but am I really? With those who have hurt me?

With those who believe differently? With those who rub me the wrong way? With myself even? What is compassion anyway? Some of Karen Armstrong's "12 Steps" include:

- Compassion for yourself
- Mindfulness
- How should we speak to each other
- Love your enemies,

The "12 Steps" are very interesting, very thought provoking, and worthy of

a study group too. It is not expensive (\$25). The author was awarded the TED prize (\$100,000) and began working on the Charter of Compassion, created online by the general public, and crafted by leading thinkers in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The charter was signed in November 2009 by a thousand religious and secular leaders. Visit www.charterforcompassion.org for more information.

Consuming Youth: Leading Teens Through Consumer Culture

JUDY STEERS
COORDINATOR FOR YOUTH INITIATIVES

There's no shortage of books on youth ministry out there. For most youth ministry practitioners, including parish clergy, if we've been around for more than a year or two, we are looking for a book that doesn't tell us things we already know. Nor do we need to read about the 'latest greatest' program ideas or about trends in youth culture.

What we so badly need is a new way to think about and re-vision youth ministry. *Consuming Youth: Leading Teens Through Consumer Culture*, a new release from Zondervan/Youth Specialties by John Berard, James Penner and Rick Bartlett, offers just that in a solid, inspiring and very readable way.

Well researched, and peppered with references, quotes, stories and case studies, the book includes excellent questions for reflection at the end of each chapter. The authors take us through an enlightening challenge to our cultural view of youth as consum-

ers and how that affects identity and vocational formation.

They offer a thorough history of the approach to youth and youth ministry. This is not to just give us facts and figures, but to trace an arc of ministry as a response to culture and give us a better perspective on why we do what we do. Finally, through a case study and analysis, they offer a new way of thinking about youth ministry. They are not giving us a 'quick fix' or a 'do this' approach, but instead getting us thinking about how we can re-imagine these ideas in our own unique context—whether congregation, youth club, organization or simply in our relationships with youth we know.

The book is not perfect. I was disappointed by the lack of Canadian content or examples, despite two of the authors being Canadian. Clearly, marketing to an American audience is what is on the publisher's mind. Still, we in Canada are used to translating American books into our own context, and the consumer mentality realities presented are bang on.

The authors also show their own stripes a bit too much in their treatment of the history of youth ministry. They come across a little biased to their own organizations. But they make their points well and by the end of the book I found myself inspired to apply their solid and accessible conclusions.

I bought copies for some of my youth ministry colleagues and this will be the book I recommend this year, for those trying to work out how to approach youth ministry, whether as a youth worker, solo clergy or a visioning team.

John Berard is one of the guest speakers at the upcoming "Common Ground 2011" youth ministry leaders' event in London Ontario, May 31 to June 5. Visit www.commonground2011.ca for more information.

Judy Steers is the Coordinator for Youth Initiatives for the Anglican Church of Canada and the director of the Ask & Imagine Youth Theology Program at Huron University College.

Good King James | Part 2



FRANCEAN CAMPBELL
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

It happens from time to time in the best of families: something gets lost in the newspaper world. One June it was a piece I wrote called "All the Saints of Summer" (in retrospect a nod to the late great Stephen Reynolds). Just dropped out of sight, before it saw print. (It showed up some months later, none the less for wear).

It's happened again. This time, page 3 of the story behind the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible, lost from the April edition of the Niagara Anglican. Here it is, then, slightly revised because I had the chance.

Eric Griffith, canon and biblical scholar, had explained to me that the purpose of the new bible was to be read aloud in church. James had appointed Lancelot Andrews to supervise the project. The work was completed in 1611. Four centuries later Adam Nicolson wrote a commentary on it called *God's Secretaries* for the American market. It became a best seller. And now my slightly revised conclusion:

A point on which I stand corrected or at least informed was the issue of errors in the Authorized Version given as the main reason for a new edition. Research and scholarship, including archaeological discoveries such as the Dead Sea scrolls, claimed that these were simply too many and too serious to be ignored indefinitely—a frustrating answer for the casual inquirer—more than the baby and the bathwater, giving up so much of the beloved language of Shakespeare's time just

to get it right? Enough to satisfy the respected editor, Bruce Metzger, evidently. And so. Behold, it came to pass that the Holy Bible NRSV was born in 1989. Divinity students could buy it for \$10.

Perhaps the more obvious point made in favour of a new edition is just what a word or a passage actually means—not what it used to mean, or how it should sound. More than one or two clerics of our own time argue that clarity of meaning is essential for the new or young reader, hearer, or student. I myself struggle constantly with archaic language, however musical to the ear, to extract what it is saying. Just try John 9:41 "If you were blind, you would not have sinned. But now that you say, 'We see', your sin remains."

Which leads one to think: Is it time even now for yet a new approach to the scriptures, one that combines truth and art in equal measure? Come ye poets, form a committee, and try.

Where do I belong?

NANCY KNIGHT
ST. GEORGE'S LOWVILLE

"What planet are you from, lady?" the man behind the glass ticket booth snarled at me. I was in a downtown subway station and I'd just asked him the cost of a one way ticket. I was over fifty years old, almost twice his age, but I was feeling like a child.

The Toronto Transit Commission employee pointed to a sign on the wall. "I'm sorry, I can't read that sign," I said. I didn't think to tell him why.

The man glared. "Two seventy-five," he said pointing to a metal box on the counter in front of me.

It took me a few minutes to find the change in my small purse. Several people were forming a line behind me. I sensed that they were all in a hurry. I wished that I was back at home, surrounded by people I knew.

At home in Kilbride, the tiny village near St. George's Lowville where I'd lived for more than twenty years, it had always been easy to take my time—to learn at my own pace. Years earlier, a virus had wrecked havoc with my vision, and within weeks, I was a visually disabled woman with a husband and two young children. I had to learn how to do what I'd been doing for years—all over again. But my husband, Michael, and my two children, David and Katie, had never cared how early I had to start a meal in order to get it on the table. They hadn't cared that it took me longer to comb my hair, get dressed, or put my shoes on. They simply got used to waiting.

As the children were growing up, they were always there to help. At the mall, they read the store names for me; at the supermarket, they told me what the sizes and prices were; and when we walked around our tiny community, they whispered the names of people we knew as they approached us.

But all too soon, my children were living their own lives and, for the next few years, my husband was going to be working in Toronto. Because of his long hours and erratic schedule, we decided to stay in the city Monday to Friday and at the house in Kilbride on the weekends whenever we could.

After that first subway station experience, I knew it was going to take me some time to learn how to negotiate my way around the largest city in Canada. Everyone I knew told me I needed a white cane. "You don't want people to think you're crazy, mom. You want them to know you can't see," my son told me. I called the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Days later, I had a sporty white cane and, with the help of a CNIB mobility instructor, I began to discover the busy neighbourhood around our rented accommodation.

Once I'd asked someone where a business I needed was, I had

to remember the exact location, because I can't read the signs that tell everyone else where they are. I listened carefully to words I'd never seen or heard before. "What is a shawarma?" "Is that really called a fallawfull?" I had to learn about things I'd never experienced. "Why do the signals at the crosswalks make those bird sounds?" "How do I get onto a streetcar that stops in the middle of the road?"

Now, I can find everything I need within blocks of where I live. I take writing classes at the University of Toronto. It's only a fifteen minute walk away. And I can meet my friends at Timothy's, or Second Cup, or Starbucks. But dodging rush hour traffic, pushing through crowded grocery stores, and finding the right subway train can be overwhelming challenges for someone with a disability.

When we are back at the house in Kilbride, it doesn't surprise me that I look forward to Sundays at St. George's. As the ladies in our parish arrive early to prepare coffee for pre-service fellowship, I'm hurrying to put the toothpaste onto my toothbrush rather than into the sink. While I'm struggling to fasten the zipper on my coat and searching the closet for the hat I can't see, a friendly fellow is gathering that day's bulletins and taking his position at the sanctuary door.

When Michael and I finally arrive at church, someone is always standing just inside the doors with a greeting and at the top of the stairs our pastor calls us by name. I wind my way through the bodies of people whose faces I can't see and try to discern what treats are on the table ahead of me. It doesn't really matter that I can't see what they are. They're delicious anyway. Someone always says hello and takes the time to chat. My life in the city becomes ever more distant as I begin to feel the peace and love around me.

Michael and I head for the pews to rest, meditate, and pray. I say a few words of thanks for all the wonderful people who make Sundays happen. They're living lives that include the things that I can't do: driving a car, going to work, skiing down a mountain, riding a bicycle, or enjoying the magnificent view from the hill upon which our beautiful church stands.

I'm grateful that so many dedicated people are taking care of church business, teaching Sunday school, arranging and organizing social events, outreach efforts, and fundraisers. They help the people I can't help. I pray God enriches their lives through the work they do. Their patience, acceptance, and kindness refresh me. It gives me the courage to go back to my classes at the University, the confidence to enjoy my Toronto friends, and the patience I need to smile back at the fellow in the subway station ticket booth. I'm grateful for them all.

Thank you to everyone at St. George's.

Transforming unjust structures | Including the Oppressed

COLLEEN SYM

"The first form of justice for the oppressed is the outcry against injustice—the expression of pain and anger and rage". As Church, our first act of justice is to hear that outcry and our second act is to respond. It's not always easy to know how. One way is to advocate for change.

Over the past twenty five years, I have been involved in many different kinds of advocacy. The experience has been diverse: involving representation of Her Majesty the Queen and the lowliest of her subjects, prosecuting homicides and defending evictions, bringing test cases designed to challenge laws and programs as being discriminatory and unjust and representing in routine appeals of denials of public benefits as well as policy and law reform activities and community development activities and campaigns. One theme that runs through all of this is seeking justice through enabling the outcry of those who were victimized, marginalized and oppressed.

In the context of the Church, the purpose of advocacy is to transform the unjust structures of society to develop relations that are more equitable and respectful of human dignity and creation itself. To further this end, our ser-

vice ministries should not only ensure access to things like food and shelter and fellowship, but be a way to transform our relationships with those members of our communities who we seek to serve.

This means working with those who access our community centres, day-cares, breakfast programs, thrift shops, food banks, overnight shelters, hospital-ity programs and other social services to reduce the harmful impact of oppression or injustice which may result in psychological damage and material deprivation and working with them for positive personal and societal change.

Personal transformation and social transformation when carried out together helps us to see the connection between private/individual problems and the structural or systemic source of the trouble. This makes the connection between our call to loving service of those in need and prophetic social justice making through explicitly recognizing the responsibility to address injustice at the level of the individual while recognizing that it is rooted in the unjust structures of society that must also be changed.

It should be a strength of the Church that the work on behalf of individuals informs our advocacy work. And likewise, the work on behalf of the individuals should be informed by

our awareness of the political, social, cultural and structural context of those we are seeking to assist.

We should see the work of the many dedicated volunteers engaged in service ministries at the parish level "as an integral element of the larger movement of social transformation" and as important as the advocacy work that goes on in partnership with people who are experiencing injustice or oppression and with other agencies, movements and coalitions committed to social change.

People with lived experience of poverty, racism, violence and other sources of oppression must be the agents of their own change and be empowered to find and make their voices be heard in their outcry against injustice so that they themselves can be a part of the political discourse and action for change.

In supporting those who seek to find their voice we must be sensitive to the impact of oppression on them such as feelings of inferiority, low self-esteem, loss of personal identity, fearfulness, powerlessness, anger, alienation, guilt, isolation and ambivalence. Oppression when it has been internalized may also result in self-blame and feelings of being at fault. Too often our society 'patholo-

gizes' issues as being personal trouble resulting from poor choices or inherent weaknesses of character instead of acknowledging and responding to the structural source of these troubles.

In providing services and supports we must be careful not to reproduce oppressive patterns and relationships or to be judgemental. A part of being in respectful relationship is to recognize that "professional knowledge is not to be privileged over knowledge gained from lived experience." At all times we should work together with those with lived experience to solve problems in a non-authoritarian way. We should be striving for egalitarian and participatory relationships in all aspects of our lives. The value of the mutual learning that will happen will be quickly apparent.

While acknowledging that skills and resources to build relationships that enables the empowerment of those with lived experience to be their own agents of change are limited, a way to get started is to involve the users of services, those with lived experience of injustice, in driving all aspect of the services the Church provides at the parish level and at the Diocesan level.

Inclusion of people with lived experience in the justice and service ministries "involves helping them to

define their own needs, to develop the skills and vocabulary to articulate those needs, to gain access to public forums to address the structures of power and domination, and to help legitimize these authentic voices by supporting them in every way possible."

In turn, we will be inspired by their courage and resilience and benefit from their experience and skills in responding to and overcoming adversity. Acting together will make us better servants and also enhance our credibility and legitimacy as advocates.

There are models of participation that have been developed to incorporate the voices of persons with lived experience in poverty eradication work, those of survivors of violence against women in eliminating violence, those who experience mental illness in advocating for patients' rights and the work going on in the context of reconciliation. These models can provide a starting point for looking at our parish and Diocesan committees, groups and ministries to plan for ways to include the true experts on injustice, those with lived experience, in our prophetic social justice making journey.

Let's try responding to the outcry against injustice by being inclusive of those whose lives we seek to directly affect.

We make a *living* by what we get ...
but we make a *life* by what we give

— WINSTON CHURCHILL

Have you ever wondered how easy it can be to make a difference? Or how you may support your community? Maybe you want to support those around you who are the most vulnerable, or you may want to simply be remembered. Everyone wants to *do* or *give* more, but just don't know how easy it is to achieve.

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