

# ~ The Epistle ~

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NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST  
THE ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CANADA • TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN COMMUNION  
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THE MOST REVEREND SHANE B. JANZEN, ARCHBISHOP AND RECTOR

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ALL too quickly it would seem comes the changing of the seasons. Spring to summer, and summer to autumn. With the changing of the seasons comes planting, ripening, and harvest. For us here in Canada, autumn brings with it the traditional festival of Harvest Thanksgiving, perhaps one of the oldest festivals in the world. It is as old as the fields and valleys. It began when primitive man felt within himself a stirring of thankfulness to some one or some thing for the mystery of life and the bounty of the land and sea. The ancient Israelites of the Old Testament had their service of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth. Even the secular world pauses briefly on the first Monday in October here in Canada to give thanks, even if it is sometimes more a festival of overstuffed turkeys and overstuffed people.

So too, we at St. John's welcome Harvest Thanksgiving each autumn. Our church is decorated in an array of produce, including the traditional cornucopia. We sing the familiar harvest thanksgiving hymns. But over and above all of these familiar rituals of Thanksgiving is the underlying truth universally held but not always realized that God is a bountiful Provider; and that in this bountiful provision we learn of God's love and goodness toward us. We pause to give thanks to God for His bounty and provision: For the sun, the rain, the beauty of land and sea; for food and shelter; freedom and peace; for our families and friends. And, most importantly of all, for God's gift of faith and the promise of everlasting life.

Thanksgiving is not only a time to give thanks for the generosity of God's provision for our physical well-being and for the freedoms and blessings we enjoy in this great land of ours, but it is also a time to give thanks for God's care and concern for our spiritual well-being. Every soul is precious in God's sight, whether the person be rich or poor, learned or ignorant, mentally or physically challenged; whether a saint or sinner; be it the unborn, the aged, the sick and the dying -- all are precious in God's sight. His love for us is unconditional; He desires only our well-being and our salvation.

Like His generous bounty at harvest, the salvation of God from sin and death is free. We cannot buy it. We cannot earn it. We can never deserve it. It is completely and unconditionally free in God's loving gift to us in His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. All we are required to do in return is to accept God's generous, loving gift of salvation with penitent hearts and humility of soul -- giving God in turn our praise and thanksgiving.

A farmer sowing seed in a field in the cold of a Spring day may seem to be doing something rather foolish -- and when the young shoots first appear they seem so frail as to have no real chance of survival. It is not until harvest, when food for man and beast is before the eyes of all, that the whole mysterious process is made clear. It is then that God's design, God's promise is fulfilled and made evident.

And what of God's design in your own life? Perhaps you can see no design, no plan or purpose for your life, or for the life of a loved one. Perhaps there are more questions than answers. But, as so many faithful Christian men and women have come to know through the years, when we look back over our life and reflect on the past with the eyes of faith, we can indeed see the design of God; and know that behind all the things we could not understand and found so difficult to accept at the time, there was the loving hand of God: ever-present, leading, guiding, comforting, forgiving.

God indeed has a design and a plan for each life. No life is useless. Each life has a meaning and a purpose. By God's loving plan, our lives are moving toward a destiny, a goal and a place chosen of God. Our life here is but a preparation for a fuller life, for the perfect vision of God; Who has prepared for us such wonderful things beyond anything we could ever imagine or conceive.

One day soon will come the harvest of our souls. The day when God will call us home for the Great Thanksgiving Banquet, when we shall know ourselves even as God knows us. Then we shall rejoice in the rich harvest of salvation.

*Archbishop Shane B. Janzen*

## Reflections of Autumn

David Jeremiah  
*Turning Point*

**M**Y childhood autumns hold precious memories—the fall revival at church, unpacking warmer clothing, hot cocoa, harvest moons, fires in the hearth, a well-stocked pantry, and best of all—FOOTBALL! I loved it.

The autumn of life is a strange mixture of nostalgia, blessings, and potential. It yields the harvest of seeds we've sown throughout life and braces us for colder days to come.

When life's autumn arrives, we look back and better understand the way God led us; but we still have work to do—the best and fullest. It's a good transition time.

"Autumn" only occurs once in the Bible. In Jude 1:12, false teachers are compared to "autumn trees without fruit," implying that autumn should be a fruitful season, the most abundant of the year. How can we take advantage of the "autumn of life"?

### The Unchanging Nature of God

The seasons come and go, so focus on the God who remains unchanged and unchanging. "LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" (Psalm 90:1-2).

There's a lot of unwelcome change in our world. Moral and societal changes bother us most when we turn on our television or glance at the magazines. We're painfully aware our kids are growing up in a world far different from the one we knew as children.

And personal changes—children leaving home, the passing of dear friends, and the slow, steady decline in our vitality and health. Sometimes we feel outdated at work.

But amid all the changes, one thing, one person, never changes—our eternal God. Remember this verse from "Abide with Me"?

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*  
Henry F. Lyte

J. I. Packer points out that God does not change. His life is always the same. His character is always dependable. His truth, ways, and purposes do not change. His Son does not change. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

His children will enjoy His fellowship a million years from now. The world may fade, the stars may fall, the seasons may change, and winter may come. But the God who has been our help

in ages past is our hope for years to come. In Him we have permanence, stability, joy unshakable, and life unending.

### The Divine Foresight of God

We've all suffered setbacks along the way. But God promised, "I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten. . . . You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God" (Joel 2:25-26). His divine forethought knew it all in advance, and He can be trusted with what has happened to us in years past.

Our omniscient Savior knows the end from the beginning, and He will bless whatever is yielded to Him. Focus on His foreknowledge, providence, and sovereignty.

### The Wonderful Blessings of God

The autumn of life is a great time to focus on God's wonderful blessings—family, friends, strength, shelter, provision, guidance, care, fruitful ministry, opportunities to serve, more time to pray and study His Word, and eternal life still to come.

During life's autumn, we have a richer perspective and can count more blessings than ever before.

### A Renewed Commitment to God

Autumn is a good time to focus on your commitment to God. Some of the saddest words in the Bible are in Jeremiah 8:20, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." If you've never made a commitment to Jesus Christ, do it now, while there is still time.

If you are a follower of Christ, remember to remain close to Him during the shifting seasons of life.

During autumn, we all know that winter lies ahead, but if winter comes, can spring be far behind?



## ALL SAINTS & ALL SOULS

THE month of November begins with two High feasts in the Church Calendar: All Saints Day and All Souls Day. In these two festivals the Church calls us to remembrance and prayer. We remember and honour the countless men and women who in the course of human history believed in, witnessed to, and lived heroically for Jesus Christ. Those who (in the words of the Baptismal Rite in the Prayer Book) have 'confessed the faith of Christ crucified, fought under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and continued Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto their lives end'. Some are known by name throughout the Church; some are known but to a few; and some walk among us even now -- they who light our way by the holiness of their lives.

Those who are called the 'saints of God' are men and women of humility, love, trust, fidelity, and courage. They are made righteous by faith, and saints by prayer and good works. Their interests and desires are tuned to the kingdom of God. They take seriously the call to take up the cross and follow Jesus. Their lives are testaments of faith in God, even unto death.

In the Christian faith, devotion to the saints is not merely a mark of respect or a brief prayer on certain feast days, but a deeply felt spiritual communion, an attentive study of the precious examples and lessons which the saints give us to inspire and encourage us along life's way. The communion of saints bless God and, in turn, obtain God's blessing for us who soldier on in this earthly pilgrimage; and through their intercession in heaven, we are guided along our spiritual journey. We have revealed to us in the Second Book of Esdras, chapter 2, the glory which is the Communion of Saints in heaven:

*"I Esdras saw upon the mount Sion a great people, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. And in the midst of them there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; which I marvelled at greatly. So I asked the angel, and said, 'Sir, what are these?' He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God; now are they crowned, and received palms. Then said I unto the angel, 'What young person is it that crowneth them, and giveth them palms in their hands?' So he answered and said unto me, 'It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world.' Then began I greatly to commend them that stood so stiffly for the name of the Lord. Then the angel said unto me, 'Go thy way, and tell my people what manner of things, and how great wonders of the Lord thy God, thou hast seen."*

For us, the marks of sanctity, the signs of sainthood, are clearly set out in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, and in particular, the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are promises of the kingdom of God and set out the rights and responsibilities of all those who desire to be citizens of heaven. We learn that to be a saint in the kingdom of God is to be obedient to the calling of God, to live a life in conformity with the teachings of the Gospel. It is to be satisfied with the fullness of God; to seek for, and to give in return, mercy and forgiveness; to behold God in the splendour of His creation; and most precious of all, to be a partaker of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

If we examine the words of the Sermon on the Mount, it is clear that Jesus expects His teaching to be put into practice. It is not a formless ethical ideal, nor a set of rights without responsibilities; and, although summed up in the love of God and love of neighbour, the teachings are concrete and specific. Our Lord's Sermon reveals to us that righteousness is more than the sum of God's commandments -- it is a total attitude of mind, body and soul. Those who are praised in Holy Scripture are men and women of faith who strive for righteousness of life. They are not yet perfect, but they are faithful. Their interests and desires are focused on the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The saints take seriously the call to holiness of life, while always recognizing that it is only by the grace and mercy of God that we achieve our salvation. It is these qualities and characteristics that we honour and celebrate on All Saints Day and reflect upon as we remember the faithful departed on All Souls Day.

Our belief in the Communion of Saints is real; for we know that those who have exemplified the life of Christ and have gone before us marked with the sign of faith are not separated from the community of believers living today. When we join in the worship of the Church militant here on earth we echo and partake of the worship of the Church triumphant in heaven and the Church expectant awaiting the Day of Resurrection.

We are part of the communion of saints, and with the saints we worship and glorify God with total commitment of mind, body, and soul -- taking our part in His eternal plan of salvation.

The models and mentors of our lives as Christians stand before us, revealed in the pages of Holy Scripture; told in the annals of the Christian Church; and lived in the faithful witness of those who walk yet among us, 'of whom the world is not worthy'.

May we in our time, and in our lives, be called 'saints of God', and so be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

## FEAST OF DEDICATION

According to the Book of Common Prayer, the Feast of Dedication is the anniversary, or the day observed by custom as the anniversary, of the consecration of a church building. In the year 1536, Convocation ordered the keeping of this festival on the first Sunday of October. While this church building was actually consecrated as the Anglican Catholic Church of Saint John the Evangelist on May 10, 1987, we celebrate the Feast of Dedication in October in commemoration of our founding as a Parish in 1977 and the celebration of its first Mass on the first Sunday in October of that year.

The Feast of Dedication is a good time to draw our thoughts and prayers to the Church, and to its purpose and meaning within the divine plan of salvation. As the Bible is the source of all authority and doctrine, it is important that we first turn to the Scriptures in our understanding of what is 'The Church'. Both the Old and New Testaments provide a host of biblical metaphors to describe the essence of the Church and its mission. In part the Bible describes the Church using agrarian images: "The Church is...a sheepfold, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ (*cf. John 10:1-10*). It is also the flock, of which God foretold that He Himself would be the shepherd (*cf. Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:11ff.*), and whose sheep, although watched over by human shepherds, are nevertheless at all times led and brought to pasture by Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for His sheep (*cf. John 10:11-15*).

The Bible goes on to provide images drawn from architecture in describing the nature of the Church. Thus the Church is the "building of God" (*1 Cor. 3:9*) whose cornerstone is Christ (*Matt. 21:42*). Built by the apostles on the one "foundation" which is Jesus Christ (*1 Cor. 3:11*), the Church is the "household of God" in the Spirit (*cf. Eph. 2:19-22*); the dwelling place of God among men (*Rev. 21:3*). As living stones, we here on earth are built into it" (*cf. 1 Peter 2:5*). The Church is also described as "the Jerusalem which is above" (*Gal. 4:26*) and the "spotless bride of the Lamb" (*Rev. 19:7*), whom Christ "loved and for whom He delivered Himself that He might sanctify her" (*Eph. 5: 25-26*).

This rich biblical imagery reminds us that the Church is something more than an 'institution'; that the Church is something more than the Cathedral Church of St. John the Evangelist, or Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, or the Traditional Anglican Communion. It reminds us that the Church does not exist for itself, nor to maintain its own institutional presence. Rather, the Church exists as a dynamic evangelical witness to tell the world that "in the fullness of time, [God] sent His Son, born of a woman, for the salvation of the world." (*cf. Gal. 4:4*)

As the Fathers of the Church have described her, the Church is "the kingdom of God now present in mystery." She is the 'mystical Body of Christ', who like her Lord and Head, is both human and divine. As such, the Church cannot think of itself as merely one religious organization among many in a supermarket of religious options. The Church is the 'household of God and the dwelling place of God among men'; the place where the human family learns the truth about its origins, its dignity, and its destiny. The Church is the place where we, as the adopted sons and daughters of God, experience a foretaste of our true destiny, which is eternal life within the light and love of the Holy Trinity.

Which is why the Church – one, holy, apostolic, and catholic – is best described as a *communio* – a communion of believers with the living God, with one another, and with the saints who have gone before us. Those who participate in that communion – husbands and wives, parents and children, friends and colleagues, clergy and laity – have a relationship to one another in that communion which is like none other, for those in the communion of the Church are part of the Body of Christ.

This Church, this 'communion of believers', extends over time and beyond time. It embraces far more than those we see around us in the world. For the Church embraces and encompasses those who now see God as He is (the 'Church Triumphant'); those who have died and gone before us awaiting the Day of Resurrection (the 'Church Expectant'); and those living now who believe on His Name (the 'Church Militant here on earth').

The Church, as the Body of Christ, is also the continuation in time of Christ's commission to His Apostles; and of the mission of the Holy Spirit in the world. As such the Church's primary task is that of *evangelization* – the sharing of the good news that God loves the world; that He gave His only-begotten Son for the salvation of the world; and that He invites all in the world to a life of love, communion, and eternal happiness.

In turn, the Church and our mission of evangelization must be nurtured in prayer, especially the communal prayer of the Church in its liturgy. By coming together as the Body of Christ in worshipping the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we deepen our understanding of the truth in Jesus Christ and are equipped for our evangelical mission in the world.

It is this Church, this communion of believers in time and eternity, that we celebrate on the Feast of Dedication. Let us be faithful Christians, faithful churchmen and women, building up the Body of Christ until He comes again in glory.

# CATHEDRAL CALENDAR

OCTOBER 4	DEDICATION SUNDAY (COMM. TRINITY XVIII) MATTINS 9:15 AM SOLEMN HIGH MASS 10:00 AM
OCTOBER 8	MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM
OCTOBER 11	HARVEST THANKSGIVING (COMM. TRINITY XIX) MATTINS 9:15 AM HIGH MASS 10:00 AM
<i>OCTOBER 14 ~ OCTOBER 27</i>	<i>ARCHBISHOP JANZEN AWAY (LINCOLN, UK &amp; LUSAKA, ZAMBIA)</i>
OCTOBER 15	MASS 9:30 AM
OCTOBER 18	SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST (COMM. TRINITY XX) MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM
OCTOBER 22	MASS 9:30 AM
OCTOBER 25	TRINITY XI MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM
OCTOBER 28	ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE, APOSTLES MASS 9:30 AM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7:00 PM
OCTOBER 29	MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM
NOVEMBER 1	ALL SAINTS SUNDAY (COMM. TRINITY XXII) MATTINS 9:15 AM SOLEMN HIGH MASS 10:00 AM
NOVEMBER 2	ALL SOULS DAY REQUIEM MASS 9:30 AM
NOVEMBER 5	MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM
NOVEMBER 8	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY (COMM. TRINITY XXIII) MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

<b>NOVEMBER 12</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 15</b> <i>(ARCHBISHOP JANZEN IN VANCOUVER)</i>	<b>TRINITY XXV MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 18</b>	<b>PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ~ 7:00 PM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 19</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 22</b>	<b>CHRIST THE KING: SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT MATTINS 9:15 AM HIGH MASS 10:00 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 26</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 29</b>	<b>FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT MATTINS 9:15 AM HIGH MASS 10:00 AM EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (BUDGET) 11:30 AM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 30</b>	<b>ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE MASS 9:30 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 3</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 6</b>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 8</b>	<b>CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY MASS 9:30 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 10</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 13</b>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 16</b>	<b>PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ~ 7:00 PM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 17</b>	<b>MASS 9:30 AM STUDY GROUP 10:30 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 20</b>	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT MATTINS 9:15 AM SUNG MASS 10:00 AM</b>
<b>DECEMBER 21</b>	<b>SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE MASS 9:30 AM</b>