

~ The Epistle ~

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

WE have entered into the beautiful Season of Epiphanytide, starting with the celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th, and carrying us through to Septuagesima on February 12th. I pray all of you God's love, blessing and guidance throughout 2017. I pray too that God will continue to bless, prosper and guide His Church in this Cathedral Parish and indeed across the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, and throughout the Traditional Anglican Communion.

The Season of Epiphany exhorts us to an imitation and a manifestation of Christ in our own lives and, in the light of His divine majesty, to steadfastness and hope in Him throughout the tribulations of our world. As the saying goes: "Wise men still seek Him"; and so should we as we make our journey from Bethelhem to Nazareth, Jerusalem to Mount Calvary, from the empty tomb to the glory of Heaven.

As the Wise Men sought for the Christ Child by the sign of a Star in the heavens, so today men and women seek for a saviour, one who will bring meaning and order to modern life. The question which men and women of faith have asked for over two thousand years is very simple but also very profound and life-altering: "What think ye of Christ?" It is the question which every person must ask him or her self again this Epiphanytide, when Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God, was made manifested to the world. In an article in *Touchstone* magazine, the editors pose this very question and it is worthwhile to consider their response:

The question of the nature of Man is ultimately a christological question: "What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is he?" For the Christian, the resounding answer is, "Jesus is Lord." He is the Son of God, the Savior.

Just as the question about life as a gift separates the religious believer from the secular materialist, so the question about who Jesus Christ is separates the Christian from not only other religious believers but also from many who claim to be Christians today. For the name of Jesus Christ is bandied about in churches by those who no longer mean what the Church has always meant. It has simply become a phrase with connotations that vary depending on one's view of Christ: the great pacifist, the liberator,

the messiah, the moral teacher, the revolutionary, the mystic, my best pal, or what have you.

But there is no room in the churches for compromise here. There can be no hesitation in confessing along with St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" There is a great gulf fixed between those who believe and confess that the eternal Word of God "became flesh and dwelt among us" and that "we have seen his glory, as of the only-begotten Son, in the bosom of the Father," and those who deny this.

We confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who for our sake and for our salvation was made man, conceived of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. This is the Gift of God that we celebrate in the Christmas services of the churches and confess in the Creed. This is non-negotiable. Theologians and clergy employed by the churches have a responsibility to uncompromisingly proclaim this truth. Those who do not are unfaithful and need to be removed from their teaching offices.

The responsibility to "uncompromisingly proclaim" the truth of Jesus Christ is that of every Christian, whether ordained or layman, young or old. We are called to manifest the true image of Christ to the world, and in so doing, bring to the world the source of our faith, hope, and love -- Jesus Christ, 'the light to the nations and the glory of Israel'.

2017 marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of our Parish in 1977. We will commemorate this milestone with a special Mass and celebration on Sunday, October 1st (in commemoration of the first Parish Mass celebrated on the first Sunday in October 1977). Sonia Nicholson (our Parish Archivist) will be preparing a revised history of the Parish, together with displays of past events, people, and celebrations.

So as we enter upon 2017, and the 40th year of our Cathedral Parish, let us go forth with renewed faith, hope and love. Let us take with us the joy of Christmas, the truth of the revelation of Jesus Christ in His Epiphany, and the living witness of the traditional Anglican expression of the Christian Faith.

Archbishop Shane B. Janzen

The Church in Exile
by Lee Beach
Faith Today (Jan/Feb 2017)

KATHY passed by the soda crackers and canned tuna and turned into the soft drink aisle. Halfway up were two women smiling and talking animatedly, each holding a bottle of San Pellegrino and in no hurry to put them into their carts. As Kathy passed them she saw one reach out and put her hand to rub her companion's back. Kathy still needed laundry detergent. When she got to that aisle, there was a man with dark brown skin and a woman in a flowing, navy-blue-and-gold Indian sari. Kathy said a friendly "Excuse me" and got a quick smile and an equally friendly, "Oh sorry, let me get out of your way" from the woman. Kathy noticed a red dot on the woman's forehead – a decoration she had never seen in her childhood but an almost everyday sight these days.

Kathy also had to pick up an extra dozen eggs. Her daughter's class was doing a Spring Fun Festival egg hunt, which required each student to bring in six hardboiled eggs to decorate. The teacher said there would be prizes for those who found the most eggs, but Kathy was pretty sure every student would get roughly an equal amount in the end. The hunt would take place on the Thursday before Good Friday, but there had been no mention of the term "Easter" in the school's newsletter.

At the checkout counter, Kathy halfheartedly glanced at the pictures and headlines of the magazine covers. One featured a scantily clad celebrity and Ten New Ways to Make Him Say Oh! Another featured an angry looking Hollywood star and a headline promising details about why she was divorcing her unfaithful husband.

There was nothing special about the shopping and the checkout – just life going on as normal. On the way home she passed a church sign that read, "Know Jesus, Know God. No Jesus. No God." As a Christian, Kathy understood the idea, but she wondered how much resonance it had with people like those in the grocery store.

While only in her early 40s, Kathy remembered a time when her town was different, when the world was different. When a saying like that on a church sign did not seem so ... out of place.

Kathy's story hints at many of the cultural changes in which the Church finds itself. In fact Canadian culture has gone through a massive shift over the last several decades, and it's not over yet. These changes encompass a significant reconfiguring of religious, family, ethical and community life.

If it were true that at one time in Canadian culture the Church occupied a place at (or at least near) the centre of culture, this is no longer the case.

As the Church experiences an overall decline in numbers, as Christianity holds far less influence, and as more people become disaffected by religion as a whole, Kathy's uncertainty about how the Church should understand its new place in Canadian culture and how it should respond are questions for all of us.

Actually the experience of Christianity being at the centre of culture, which seems so normal to most of us, was not the experience of the Early Church or of the people of Israel in the Old Testament, and today it is not the experience of much of the Church in other parts of the world. Biblical history and much of international church history is informed by a far different experience – one of exile.

If you were a citizen of Jerusalem in 587 BCE, you would have experienced marauding hordes of Babylonian soldiers overtaking your city, destroying your most sacred buildings, killing your friends and family, and sending many of them off to live in captivity back in Babylon. Your experience would be one of loss and drastic change. The world you once knew was over and a new normal was beginning.

For Israel this was the start of their experience of living away from home. Going from a people who had control over religion, ethics and political life to a people whose control was now limited and tentative in all those spheres. This was exile. Most of the Old Testament is written as a response to this experience.

Likewise, the Early Church knew nothing of being at or near the centre of cultural power. Rather they were a people of exile (*1 Peter 1:1, 2:11*).

Exile is an apt motif for the Church in Canada today. Exile does not always have to entail violent or drastic expulsion from your homeland. It is the experience of living away from home. Exile can take place even without leaving your physical locale. It can happen when the place that once felt like home no longer does – when we lose autonomy, status or power. When these things happen, the place that once seemed like home is no longer as welcoming or comfortable a place to be.

In many ways this is the current experience of the Church in Canada. While this might provide reason for lament, it should also provide encouragement because exile generated a fresh appropriation of their identity as the people of God for Israel, and provided the Early Church with the creative impetus to bring the hope of the gospel to the first-century context in which it found itself. Similarly exile has generative possibilities for the Church in Canada.

Exile has a way of clarifying things. It calls for answers to the questions, "How did we get here?" and "Who are we now?" Exile calls our identity into question. It prompts us to consider what went wrong and how we should now live in light of this new reality.

For the Church in Canada the reality of our circumstances is producing this kind of reorientation. The missional nature of the Church is being rediscovered. It was roughly true at one time in Canadian history the Church could employ a "build it and they will come" approach to mission.

Today, anyone paying attention knows that is not a strategy for church planting or growth. The Church must go into its community and engage it in a way that seeks to serve it. Exile is forcing the Church to re-engage with its biblical identity as a missional people called by God to go into the world to bring a message of hope, and embody that hope in our actions on behalf of others in our local context.

Exile is also causing sectors of the Church who might have neglected the social aspect of the gospel to reorient themselves to this essential aspect of what it means to identify as followers of Christ. Churches are rediscovering an understanding that the gospel is not just a message of salvation of the soul for a place called heaven.

Rather it is also a message that has implications for the way we live today. It is a message of healing and transformation for people and communities in the here and now as we are called to help our communities flourish.

While in exile the prophet Jeremiah said to the Hebrew people, "Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper" (*Jeremiah 29:7*). This was a call to understand their identity as an exilic people and it captures the call on the Church in Canada today just as poignantly.

Crucial to reclaiming our identity is to learn and practise the ways of holiness. Holiness is about being set apart or distinct from the world. However, holiness does not mean separating ourselves from it. Christian holiness is another way of describing what it means to be a follower of Jesus, to pattern our lives after His example – which inevitably calls us to live lives of deep engagement with the world.

To live a life of Christ-centred holiness is multifaceted, but ultimately rooted in love. Love is a concept often misunderstood, but Jesus Himself said the primary distinction His followers should be known by was their love (*John 13:34–35*). This begins within the church community itself, but then spills over into the neighbourhood.

While holiness certainly has important ethical dimensions to it that can't be ignored, perhaps one of the greatest ways the Church can express its distinct identity in Canadian culture today is by living as a community of genuine hospitality. Individualism and isolation from neighbours, even from work colleagues, is common today. The Church is connected to the God who welcomes all people.

What would it be like for us to live as a people of genuine welcome to those around us?

- opening our homes and churches to our community, neighbours and friends
- forging more meaningful relationships
- learning to genuinely care for one another.

It would be a sign of how being in relationship with Jesus actually shapes our lives in a distinct way. In a day of increasing marginalization, the Church is invited to consider how it can take the risks that showing God's love inevitably calls for. Expressing God's love through hospitality and service will help us rediscover our identity as God's incarnational people.

Finally, as already touched upon, exile has the potential to reignite the missional identity of the Church. This must be expressed in tangible ways.

Approximately 40 years after the Babylonians captured Israel, they were conquered by Persia. Out of the Persian captivity comes the story of Nehemiah.

As a Hebrew who had risen to the position of the king's cupbearer, Nehemiah had ascended the ladder of empire successfully. However, his real concerns lay back in his homeland – he had received a report that the walls of Jerusalem were in utter disrepair. This reality was not simply one of aesthetic concern. It had deeply theological and spiritual implications.

To help re-establish the identity of the Hebrew community, he managed to get Persian government funding to complete the mission of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and initiated a renewal movement within the Israelite community.

This kind of missional initiative, which is not hostile toward the prevailing powers but seeks to find lines of collaboration to advance the mission of God, is the kind of missional imagination exile inspires.

Nehemiah is a model of tangible missional initiative ultimately concerned with getting on with the work of God despite challenging circumstances. For the Canadian Church in exile, this kind of leadership is necessary. What are the tangible initiatives your church can undertake? What lines of collaboration can be forged with community partners that can lead to mutual benefit? This is how life on the margins should inform mission and ignite missional imagination in the Church.

The half-formed questions that came up in Kathy's afternoon shopping expedition – how she should understand these changes and what they might mean for her as a Christian and for the Church in her community – are the key questions before the Church in Canada today.

The way forward is found in taking seriously the hard reality of our cultural context and refusing to be defeated by it. Instead we must be engaged by it. It must propel us into a time of rediscovering the true identity of the Church and its mission in a new context.

Our ancestors in the faith have been there before us. We are not alone. We have a blueprint to follow. It is up to us to embrace the challenge and seek the leading of the Spirit so the Church can fulfill its calling to be a blessing even in the midst of living in exile.

The next time you are grocery shopping, take in the sights and sounds around you, and ask God to help you and your church learn to live as exiles in the world – that is, as God’s missional people in the unique time in which we find ourselves in Canada today.

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WHO WE ARE...AND WHY WE ARE

ONE of the statements we make about the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada (and indeed of the Traditional Anglican Communion) is that it is bound together by the threefold cord of The Christian Faith, The Anglican Tradition, and The Book of Common Prayer. Holy Scripture reminds us that a ‘threefold cord’ is an ‘unbreakable cord’. And thus this ‘threefold cord’, a ‘trinitarian formula’ if you will, is an essential summary of our Christian belief, our historic tradition, and our liturgical worship.

Everything that we as traditional Anglicans hold to be true is summarized in a sense in this threefold formula. It is, in a way, a reflection of the fact that as Christians we hold to a Trinitarian belief, for we believe in God the Holy Trinity – One God in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Which, in turn, is reflected in our doctrine, our tradition, and our worship. And, as life is realized by being lived, so our Christian faith and our Anglican tradition are lived and expressed through our life of faith, moral conduct, and right worship.

As Anglicans continuing in the ancient faith and historic tradition handed down to us, we declare in the founding document of our Communion, the *Affirmation of Saint Louis*, that:

We gather as people called by God to be faithful and obedient to Him. As the Royal Priestly People of God, the Church is called to be, in fact, the manifestation of Christ in and to the world. True religion is revealed to man by God. We cannot decide what is truth, but rather (in obedience) ought to receive, accept, cherish, defend and teach what God has given us. The Church is created by God, and is beyond the ultimate control of man.

The *Affirmation* goes on to declare:

The Church is the Body of Christ at work in the world. She is the society of the baptized called out from the world: In it, but not of it. As Christ’s faithful Bride, she is different from the world and must not be influenced by it.

We affirm that the church of our fathers, sustained by the most Holy Trinity, lives yet, and that we, being moved by the Holy Spirit to walk only in that way, are determined to continue in the Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship and Evangelical Witness of the traditional Anglican Church doing all things necessary for the continuance of the same.

Forty years ago this September (2017), the then Parish of Saint Athanasius was established (to later be named the Parish of Saint John the Evangelist and Cathedral Church of the ACCC). It was the founding parish of what would become the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada a national church (Province) of the world-wide Traditional Anglican Communion.

The Continuing Church in Canada and the Traditional Anglican Communion around the world exists for one reason only -- to maintain and practice the Christ-centred, Scripture based, historic Anglican expression of the Christian Faith; and to witness to the same in our worship, in our belief, and in our mission to others.

Our first Bishop, the late Dr. Joseph Carmino de Catanzaro, a holy and humble man, and world renowned Christian scholar and theologian, lead us out of the turbulence rocking the Anglican Church in the 1970s and ‘80s, (which unfortunately continues today). He sought through his episcopal ministry, writings and faithful witness to uphold the traditional teachings and discipline of Christ and His Church. When Bishop deCatanzaro was consecrated as our first Bishop, he made a declaration of faith -- a declaration which is one of the foundation documents of our Church. His words are the basis for why we are here today and what we stand for as Christians:

“We are Anglican in background and tradition. We are Catholic -- not in the sense of Roman Catholic, though, no doubt, we have much in common with them. Rather, we accept the whole Christian faith.

“We therefore accept all that Jesus Christ has taught us. He is the eternal Son of God, ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life’, who was born into this world as a human child of the Virgin Mary, lived among us as a perfect human being, died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and lives and reigns for evermore. He is the Centre of our Faith -- no one else. What we believe, we believe because of Him. He is the Standard of what is right or wrong, true or false -- not what society or the contemporary world thinks.

“Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we believe in the Bible. We believe the Bible because it speaks of Him, His acts, His teachings. It points forward to them in the Old Testament: it relates them directly in the

*Parish of Saint Athanasius
& Saint John the Evangelist
1977 ~ 2017*

Gospels: it looks back on them and reflects on them in the Acts and Epistles. It looks forward to His Second Coming and final Judgement of mankind in the Book of Revelation. This Bible is infinitely precious to us because of Jesus Christ. We do not want to avoid it or explain it away!

"Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we accept the Creeds. They summarize what Christians, guided by the Holy Spirit, have always believed about Him. We recite them with pride and confidence, not with 'tongue in cheek'. They express the convictions by which we want to live and die.

"Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we accept His Commandments. We know that we are responsible to Him as the Judge of all mankind. We also know that we often fail to measure up to them, but that He offers us forgiveness of sins and His Holy Spirit to overcome our weaknesses and shortcomings and make us like Him.

"Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we believe in His Church. It is His Church, subject to His marching orders, sent by Him to witness to His truth to all men everywhere. It is not ours to change as we see fit, to make it into a social club for 'our kind of people', or into a political organization to prop up the existing order or to bring about 'social change'.

"Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we believe in His Sacraments. We believe that in Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion, Absolution, Holy Unction, Holy Matrimony, and Holy Orders, He is really present and acts for our salvation, and that we must meet Him in faith and penitence.

"Because we believe in Jesus Christ, we believe in the Sacred Ministry. Bishops, priests and deacons are His agents who must act on His instructions, first given to His apostles. They must proclaim His Word, administer His Sacraments, and on His behalf minister to the people. Their role is not to be glorified social workers, political agitators or amateur psychologists.

"We do not set up ourselves as being better or more perfect than other people. We know that we are imperfect and sinful, and that our only hope is in trying to obey our Lord Jesus Christ and to worship Him.

"We do not wish to be another sect of Christians. On the contrary, we rejoice that so many others believe what we believe, and want to be as close to them as possible. We desire to be at one with them in the one Christ, the Son of the living God, risen, ascended, glorified. To Him be all honour and glory for ever! Amen."

We gather together in the name of Christ to celebrate, practice and witness to the traditional Anglican expression of the Christian Faith – the Faith revealed by God in Christ, received and set forth in His Holy Word, expressed in the Creeds of the Church, and practiced in the doctrine and worship of The Book of Common Prayer.

What was to become the Parish of Saint John the Evangelist of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada had its beginnings in 1977, when the then Father Peter Wilkinson, Father Robert Crawley, Carl Reid, Robert Kerr and others, attended a conference of concerned Anglican churchmen at St. Louis, Missouri. From the conference, the *Affirmation of Saint Louis* was formulated, which confirmed the basic principles of Catholic faith and order by which the Continuing Church in North America would operate. The first Mass was celebrated on the first Sunday of October 1977 in the home of Father Wilkinson's mother, Mary Wilkinson, together with Denis and Janet Byrne and Nell Bradshaw. These five people were the founders of the Parish of Saint Athanasius (later to be renamed Saint John the Evangelist).

The congregation grew slowly but steadily. Moral and financial support was received from other Anglican priests in Canada. Most notable among these was Father Roland Palmer, Founder and for many years Father Superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Bracebridge, Ontario. Due to the growing congregation, arrangements were made to rent space from Grace Lutheran Church in Victoria; and the first public Mass of the new Parish of St. Athanasius was celebrated in that church on Advent Sunday, November 27, 1977. Thereafter, and for the next ten years, the Holy Eucharist was celebrated every Sunday, before an ever-growing congregation.

As 1986 progressed it became increasingly evident that the Parish could not continue indefinitely in rented premises, and steps were taken to secure a church building. In September 1987, a Mennonite Meeting Hall on Falmouth Road came on the market, and was subsequently purchased by the Parish, with possession assumed on October 31, 1987. The first Mass was celebrated on All Saints Day, 1987. The Parish was renamed Saint John the Evangelist, in memory of Father Roland Palmer, SSJE. On May 7, 1988, the new Parish Church was consecrated by the then Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Alfred Woolcock.

In the forty years following the founding of our Parish, faithful parishioners have filled the pews of the 'little white God-box' on the corner of Falmouth and Savannah; though we were once told by the then Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada that we would not survive more than six months (1977). As in the beginning of our Parish, so now into its future, we leave all to the providence of Almighty God; and pray He may continue to bless His Church in this Parish; and that we may remain faithful to His revelation in Jesus Christ.

~ ~ ~ **CATHEDRAL CALENDAR** ~ ~ ~

- January 8 **THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
Parish Epiphany Dinner in Church Hall ~ 11:30 am
- January 12 **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD ~ Mass 9:30 am**
- January 15 **SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- January 18 *Parish Council Meeting 7:00 pm*
- January 19 *Henry, Bishop & Martyr ~ Mass 9:30 am*
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- January 22 **THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- January 25 **CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL ~ Mass 9:30 am**
- January 26 *St. Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr ~ Mass 9:30 am*
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- January 29 **FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- February 2 **CANDLEMAS: FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION**
Sung Mass 9:30 am
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- February 5 **FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- February 9 *Feria or Votive ~ Mass 9:30 am*
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- February 12 **SEPTUAGESIMA**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- February 15 *Parish Council Meeting 7:00 pm*
- February 16 *Feria or Votive ~ Mass 9:30 am*
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- February 19 **SEXAGESIMA**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am
- February 23 *Feria or Votive ~ Mass 9:30 am*
Study Group at 10:30 am in Church Hall.
- February 19 **QUINQUAGESIMA**
Mattins 9:15 am & Sung Mass 10:00 am