

The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

This month we join with our fellow Americans and people all over the world in celebrating the birthday of our country on Independence Day, July 4th. As is our custom we will celebrate the Holy Communion this day at 10:00 a.m. using the propers appointed in the Book of Common Prayer (pp. 263-264). This service replaces the old "Accession of a Monarch" service from the English Prayer Book tradition. The older I get the more I grow to appreciate our wonderful country. While it is by no means perfect it is in my opinion the best country in the world. During my college years and thereafter, when I was still single, I was blessed to be able to do quite a bit of traveling in Europe. On two occasions I lived over there, once while in college, and once while working as an IT (i.e. "computer") consultant. While I love the culture, history, and beauty of Europe I always thought that America was such a better place to be. The freedom that we have, as well as the opportunity, security, and sheer choice should be cherished by all. On that last point, I was amazed when I lived in Germany how almost all of the housing looked the exact same... white, stucco/plaster walls with a red tile roof. Only in America, I thought, does one find such a wide variety of beautiful housing. The grocery stores were the same way. The amount of choice we have is unbelievable! And it goes without saying that our constitutional rights —freedom of expression, the right to bear arms, etc.— are wise and wonderful things that we ought never to take for granted. Not every person in the world has these rights, even in very civilized and modern countries! The Collect for Independence Day in the Book of Common Prayer, composed by Bishop Edward Lambe Parsons of California in 1928, states that our fathers "won their liberties of old" through the power of almighty power of God. Indeed they did. For as St. James writes in his Epistle, "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*" (1:17) This month and indeed throughout the year I hope that you will all join me in giving thanks for the United States of America, and also pray that God blesses our country. The gorgeous prayer *For Our Country* on page 36 of the Book of Common Prayer is a fantastic prayer to offer from time to time to our heavenly Father on behalf of our beloved home, the land of the free and home of the brave.

Faithfully, your priest, *J. Gordon Anderson*

July 2019

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Updates from the Church

UPCOMING SERVICES:

Jul 4th - Independence Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Jul 25th - St. James

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 6th - Transfiguration

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 15th - Assumption of the BVM

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Aug 24th - St. Bartholomew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 18th & 20th - Autumnal Ember Days

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Sep 21st - St. Matthew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Oct 18th - St. Luke

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Oct 28th - Ss. Simon & Jude

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 1st - All Saints' Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

FOR ALL THE SAINTS: *Who is Saint Walburga?*

Our new Daughters of the King chapter is named for a rather obscure but important Anglo-Saxon saint named Walburga, the Abbess of Heidenheim (d. 779). She was a notable example of the Anglo-Saxon monks and nuns who helped St. Boniface in his missionary work in Germany. She was born a princess, being the daughter of St. Richard, the holy king of the West Saxons, and was the sister of the German missionaries St. Willibald and St. Winnibald. In early childhood she was placed in a convent at Wimborne. She trained under Tatta where she served God in obscurity for twenty-seven years. But though hidden from the eyes of men, these were years of deep growth and development under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. From there she was sent to St. Lioba, Abbess of Bischofsheim. When Boniface applied to the Abbess of Wimborne for nuns to assist in the work of prayer which was necessary for the conversion of Germany, Walburga was one of those who was appointed to this work. After two years there, now skilled in medicine, she became abbess of the double monastery of Heidenheim, established by her brother, Winnibald, as the only known example of its kind in Germany. Because of her sanctity and capacity for government, she assumed full control of the entire monastery after her brother died. This double charge lasted until her death which occurred in 779. Owing to the lack of any contemporary biography practically nothing is known about her rule. In 776 the relics of Winnibald were translated to Eichstatt; in 870 her were laid to rest beside them. From the rock around her tomb medicinal oil flowed, to which miraculous cures were attributed. In 893 her relics were inspected and difused, some to the



Rhineland, others to Flanders, others to France. This spread her cult to those countries. One important center was Attigny, where Charles the Simple established a shrine in his palace chapel and named her patron of his kingdom. Her feast of May 1st inappropriately coincided with a pagan feast for the beginning of summer and the revels of witches, whence the customs of Walpurgisnacht, which have no intrinsic connection to the saint. It is, however, not impossible that the protection of crops ascribed to her and represented by the three

ears of corn in her images may have been transferred to her from the old heathen goddess "Mother Earth" (Walborg). Her more usual attributes are a crown and sceptre with a phial of oil. This still flows from her tomb. A fine collection of 16th—20th century phials for its distribution survives at Eichstatt. Walburga has been depicted by artists from the 11th till the 19th centuries. Specially notable is a 15th century tapestry cycle of her Life. A modern abbess of Eichstatt was sufficiently important to be chosen to negotiate the surrender of the town to the Americans at the end of World War II. St. Walburga's name has come down in the Church's history

as one of the great missionary women who by her prayers and instruction wrought effectively for the conversion of the German people. Her main feast is February 25th. Translation feasts are May 1st, October 12th (Eichstatt), and September 24th (Zutphen) ✠

Adapted from the "Oxford Dictionary of Saints" (OUP, 1997) and "Athletes of God: Lives of the Saints for every Day in the Year" by the Rev'd Shirley C. Hughson, O.H.C. (Holy Cross Press, 1957)

 THE CHRISTIAN YEAR: *A Sermon for the Third Sunday after Trinity & Independence Day*

Quoting what we heard from St. Paul this morning, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." From the bondage of corruption to glorious liberty. St. Paul is talking about what is going happen at the end of the world. But I don't think it is completely unfair to suggest that the imagery he uses gives us a window into what drove the colonization of America and the founding of the United States. Many people who took part in that historical process believed they were on a pilgrimage from the bondage of corruption to glorious liberty. The weekend of Independence Day seems an appropriate time to think about this subject. My interest was stimulated by an exhibition now on display at the Library of Congress. It is called "Religion and the Founding of the American Republic." I encourage you to go to look at it. I also attended a symposium of scholarly experts on the subject which helped me understand some of the issues more deeply. My grade school and high school education in American history suggested the religious roots of the colonial experience. Especially at Thanksgiving time we learned about the brave Pilgrims and Puritans who came to North America to escape the horrible religious persecution that prevailed in England in the early seventeenth century. It was only later on that I realized that much of what the Pilgrims and the Puritans were trying to escape consisted of my beloved Book of Common Prayer and (woops) Anglican bishops. That irony points up several things that seem true to me about the consideration of religion in early America. The picture like most historical pictures is more muddy than it is crystal-clear; one is going to be particularly concerned about his own group -- in our case Anglicans and especially Virginia Anglicans; and anyone who studies this potentially volatile subject is likely to come up with information that confirms his prejudices about religion and church-state relations. Especially in light of the rhetoric about religious liberty which tends to surround the colonization and Revolution, I think it is important to note that established churches were the rule rather than the exception in colonial America. Established churches are ones which all citizens, regardless of religious affiliation, pay taxes to support. New England, following those freedom-seeking Pilgrims and Puritans, tended to establish their brand of Congregationalism. In Virginia and the Carolinas the established church was Anglican. Anglican clergy here were paid through a tax on, of all politically incorrect things, tobacco. Of course the members of the Church of England who came to America were not looking

particularly for religious freedom -- they were at first looking for gold and other sorts of wealth. No matter what we think about the niceties of church-state relations now, I don't know of anyone who advocates overt tax support for Christianity in general, let alone for a particular denomination. But that was the situation in most of the colonies on the eve of the Revolution. After Yorktown the various states moved toward disestablishment at different rates of speed. In the long run, as we know, a pattern of complete disestablishment tended to prevail both in the states and in the Federal constitution. The key figures in that process were two Virginia Anglicans -- Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Now to the great questions: "Were the Founding Fathers Christians, and was the United States intended originally to be a Christian nation?" That is certainly an issue on which one's current prejudices are likely to shape one's answers about what was going on two hundred years ago. It was the clear intention of the American Revolution to establish a republican form of government -- one where effective power rested not with kings and noblemen and bishops but with elected representatives. In most places in the world, republican political ideals tended to go hand in hand with hostility to the church -- France and the French Revolution being the most glaring example. America was an exception to that pattern. The fact that religion was a factor in people's coming here in the first place created a climate which tended to foster the fusion of republican and religious values. The clear victory over Catholic France in the French and Indian War also helped. The Founding Fathers believed that liberty could be maintained and a republic could work only if the citizens were virtuous. The institution best suited to inculcating virtue was the church. So religion and churches had a necessary role to play in making the political experiment work. Most of the Fathers also thought that virtuous liberty was promoted best in a free-market, rather than an established, religious context. I am far more certain that the Founding Fathers thought religion and church were a positive good than I am that Jefferson, for example, would have signed his name to the Nicene Creed. But no matter how we conceive the history of the colonial period, it led to a society in which we can freely sign our names to the Nicene Creed. So let us resolve to use wisely and to spread "the glorious liberty of the children of God." ✠

By the late John T. Caboon, Jr. in 1998, sometime Archbishop of the Anglican Catholic Church

PARISH NEWS & UPDATES:

Building Updates

While we wait to hear from the engineers and health department about the possibility of expanding our building and adding some much needed parking we have a few other small renovation projects in various stages of completion. Here's a couple of them. *New Lights:* the vestry approved new lighting for the nave of the church. Our current lights are probably at least twenty-five years old and have been having problems working, so they need to be replaced. We are currently trying decide on what type of fixture to purchase. *New Sign:* We recently had a brand new sign made for out front because our old one significantly deteriorated. It will hopefully be installed sometime this summer. Updates on the several other projects in the works are forthcoming!

Seminarian Update

Dear Friends,

I am writing to you during the final week of my internship out west with Bp. Scarlett in Newport Beach, California. I arrived at the church on Ascension Day, so I served served at the Mass, and then the bishop and I talked about what my responsibilities for the internship would be. He said, "We don't have a task oriented style of ministry here, so I'm not going to have you in the office licking envelopes. I want to send you around to our different groups and to different parishes in our diocese, in order for you to see whether this is a model for ministry that you could work in and to figure out what kind of pastoral ministry you feel called to." So my summer has consisted of lots of observing and jumping around. Sundays, I would acolyte at their nine and eleven o'clock services, introduce myself to everybody at coffee hour, and grab lunch with a few people my age afterwards. Their services are well-attended, and they've got this pavilion outside where they have their coffee hour and other events, and it's the perfect space for fellowship, complete with a fire pit. I typically had Mondays off, and Tuesdays, my day started with a 7am men's group at a local restaurant nearby. 7am felt earlier and earlier as I adjusted to the time change! It was just a dozen or so guys getting together each week to talk and say Morning Prayer

together. Then there was a 12pm Mass that I'd serve at with a certain Fr. Kevin, and we'd hang out until Tuesday night Bible Study, which was a potluck, taught by Fr. Pomroy. Wednesdays, I would drive up to Hollywood, to St. Mary of the Angel's Church for Fr. Blake's Mass and Bible Study. That is such a beautiful church with a rich history, and I'll be preaching there this Sunday. In the evenings, I went to an Evening Prayer group in Fullerton, where a small group of people were meeting in order to start a church plant, and we'd play ping pong afterwards. Thursdays, after the 9am Mass, I would catch up with Bp. Scarlett and hang out in the office until staff meeting, which was more of a dinner than a meeting, as we never really had much of an agenda. We'd walk across the street to a restaurant and catch up. The meetings included the bishop, two of his priests at that parishes (there were others who were retired), the two women who worked in the office, and myself. Then we'd head back to the church for the evening Bible study. Fridays I had off, and Saturday mornings, the bishop would occasionally teach one of his pastoral ministry classes. Apparently he hand-selects a group of people who he thinks are comitted and could become influential people in the parish and meets with them regularly as a group. So that's what my typical has been like! I've made a lot of friends out here, because most people have been very open and friendly. This Saturday, I'm going on a hike with three friends, and with one of them, I went mountain biking for my first time last week (and probably my last time; not my thing). I've gotten a lot of beach days in on my days off. And I've become pretty close to the people I'm staying with (my sister's friend's family). This internship has been such ablessing to me. I had a conversation with Bp. Scarlett the other day to thank him and talk about the future and the possibility of working in his diocese for a few years. We're going to keep in touch as we decided which parish would be the best fit for me. And in a week and a half, I have my interviews with Bp. Grundorf, the Board of Examining Chaplains, and the Standing Committee for my ordination to the diaconate. I'll keep you posted! I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Mason ✠