

The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

This month the nation elects a new president, and in some places new members of congress and other state and local officials. This presidential election season has been fascinating to say the least. It seems that every day there are new twists and turns, scandals, and issues that come to the fore! As Christians we have to keep a number of important things in mind with regard to the election. First, if our person is not elected we still have a solemn duty to respect the one who was elected because they are human beings – and every single human being is worthy of respect and honor by virtue of being made in the image and likeness of God. Though difficult, we have to try to separate the *person* from the *political positions* that he or she holds. We ought also respect them because they occupy what is perhaps the greatest and most powerful office in the world. Saint Peter puts it very succinctly in his first Epistle, “*Honor the king.*” (1 Peter 2:17) Saint Paul also has a fairly long passage where he exhorts followers of Christ to submit to the lawful authority over them (Romans 13:1-7), which is worth reading. And of course Jesus himself famously said of paying taxes to Caesar, “*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.*” (Matthew 22:21) Second, we have a duty to pray for that person. In the Anglican tradition we have always prayed for our rulers, whether we like them or not. It is part of the liturgy and cannot be removed. Originally the prayers for governors and presidents were prayers for the monarch, but obviously after the American Revolution those prayers had to be altered to reflect our new way of government. We pray at each Mass for all “Christian” rulers (because it is a “Prayer for the Church”, not a prayer for all people everywhere) that they would “*truly and impartially administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to maintenance of [God’s] true religion, and virtue.*” (BCP p. 74) Whoever is elected to this office – the most important in the world – is going to need lots, and lots of prayer! As I say from the pulpit from time to time, what good does it do to sit around and be angry at someone whom we think is not on the right spiritual path? Why not *pray* for that person instead! Pray that God would work in their heart, and that he or she would be truly converted! Doing so is not only an act of charity.. it is an act of *sanity*, as praying for people generally makes us less angry with them. Third, and finally, we need to keep all of this in perspective. God is not going to be any less in control, or any less God if our person is not elected president. Politicians come and go. Nations come and go. But God remains forever. In Hebrews 13:8 we read that Jesus “*is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*” And his Body, the Church will always be here. For Jesus himself said that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18) May God grant each of you peace and joy!

Faithfully, your priest,

J. Gordon Anderson

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Church History, p. 2

The Coronation Service

Liturgy, p. 3

All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day

Parish News and Updates, p.4

Important News and Other Items

UPCOMING HOLY DAYS:

Nov 1st - All Saints’ Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 2nd - All Souls’ Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 21st - Presentation of BVM

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 24th - Thanksgiving Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 30th - St. Andrew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 8th - Conception of BVM

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 14th, 16th, and 17th - Advent Ember Days

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 21st - St. Thomas

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec. 24th - 25th - Christmas

TBA

CHURCH HISTORY: *The Coronation Service*

Several years ago America, along with most of the rest of the world, was enthralled with the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Will and Kate, at London's famous Westminster Abbey. Everyone was in awe of the majesty and tradition of the event. Well, there is another service that takes place at Westminster Abbey, though, not as frequently, that is even more splendid: the coronation service.

This special service is one of the only ones still in use in the world today. Developing slowly over many centuries, it reached its zenith in 1308 and went on from that time through 1685 virtually unchanged, except for the fact that after the Reformation the Book of Common Prayer Communion Service replaced the old Latin Rite of the Mass. (The rest of the rite remained in Latin until the accession of James I!) Sometimes a few "minor" changes were made as occasion demanded to satisfy the whims of a king. For example, the unfortunate King James II, who was a Roman Catholic, refused to have an Anglican Communion Service at his coronation, so there was no Holy Eucharist at his coronation. But besides little historical oddities like that, the coronation service is still essentially the same rite used by Saxon kings before the Norman conquest.

The service is actually referred to as a "consecration." Thus, the monarch is "consecrated" (set apart, made holy) to serve the nation just as a bishop is consecrated to serve the Church. The rite used to consecrate a monarch was very similar to that used for consecrating a bishop. Each included oaths of obedience to the relevant authority over them; a litany, laying on of hands, and the chanting of the *Veni Creator Spiritus* (an ancient prayer for the giving of the Holy Ghost); special Collects (prayers); anointing and the delivery of instruments of the office; and the Mass with a special eucharistic preface. Like a bishop, the consecration of a monarch came after the Gospel in the order of the Mass. Though at other times in history it was occasionally placed at the beginning of the Communion Service.

All of this made the monarch a "lay" member of the clergy. Thus, he or she was vested with liturgical vestments, and in some parts of Europe they even had the right to read or sing the Epistle or Gospel at Mass. The monarch was often made an honorary canon of cathedral churches as well! As the service of Holy Communion progresses the newly crowned ruler takes part in it,

actually offering the Chalice and Paten at the Offertory. So the king or queen in the English tradition was like a "priest" for the nation, or, an "ecclesiastical prelate", as the Bishop of Reims once addressed King Charles VII. Those familiar with their Old Testament should immediately see a biblical connection here, as the Kings of Israel acted as something like priests for their nations (e.g. Solomon in 2 Kings chapter 8).

Looking at the present coronation service reveals at least two interesting biblical and historical precedents.

First, the king or queen of England is anointed with oil just as the kings of ancient Israel and Judah. Blessed oil is poured into an "ampulla" – a golden vessel shaped like an eagle – and placed on the altar of Westminster Abbey. From that the Archbishop of Canterbury pours the blessed oil through its beak pours some oil into a spoon and anoints the monarch. Immediately prior to this the "Come Holy Ghost" (*Veni Creator Spiritus*) had been sung by the choir. And while he is doing the anointing the archbishop prays over the king or queen and asks, among other things, that God would grant that individual the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Ghost (as in the sacrament of Confirmation, BCP, p. 297)



A second biblical precedent is that the king or queen is anointed and crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the Old Testament God chose who would be a king and would then send his prophet to anoint him, which was essentially the act of crowning them. Thus we see that

Samuel, who was sort of a cross between being the last "judge" of Israel and a prophet, anointed Saul, and then later David king. (1 Samuel 9 and 16) And King Solomon was anointed by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet (1 Kings 1:34). There are several other examples of monarchs being anointed/crowned by "clergy", as it were, in the Old Testament. So it is quite in line with scripture to have the highest prelate in the land anoint and crown the king. It reminds all of the people that God is the real and ultimate ruler, and that *he* has appointed this man or woman to be his minister here on earth. (Romans 13:1-7)

For more reading on the history and symbolism of this fascinating service check out short but fascinating book *The Coronation Service* by Francis Eeles (Mowbrays, 1952). Fr. Anderson has a copy he will lend out to anyone who is interested. And also, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, you can watch clips from past British coronations on YouTube and see this symbolism and more come alive right before your eyes! ☩

LITURGY: *Does the celebration of All Saints' Day make celebrating All Souls' Day pointless?*

There was in Rome a great temple which was called the Pantheon, or the temple of all the gods. In the year 610 this temple became a Christian church, and quite fittingly it was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and All Saints. That was the origin of All Saints' Day, for which then, a proper collect, Epistle, and Gospel were drawn up to be used every year on November 1st.

Those whom the Church honors with the title of Saint are men and women who have progressed very far in holy living while they still were in their natural bodies on earth in the Church Militant. In the Creeds, Christians speak of "the Communion of Saints." The Church extends beyond the borders of the present life into eternity. The fellowship that Christians enjoy with each other, includes the holy souls who have died and gone into the presence of God. Christians on both sides of the gulf of death are, indeed, bound together in living company with each other.

Christians still on their earthly pilgrimage are encouraged by the examples of the lives of the saints of history. In the course of her long march down the corridors of time, the Church has remembered the names of those saints whose lives become holy by God's grace before their death. The little Roman girl St. Lucy, the wise matron, St. Monica, the holy Bishop Ambrose, the boy King St. Edward, the French maid St. Joan - they, and all of the other saints of the Church kalendar, are alive now, and filled with love, and begging God to give us the same measure of grace that he gave them.

And beyond the ones whose names are known are the millions who died without a name in the world's memory, but whose holy lives are known and remembered in the infinite mind of God. They lived in the corners of life, and now they stand in the glorious company of all the saints. On All Saints' Day we commemorate those whose names are not known to us. The feast stands as a reminder that God's heroes are only partly known, and that, here or

hereafter, we shall all have to reach that heroism which belongs to the saints.

Unlike All Saints' Day on which we come to the altar to remember, rejoice in, and celebrate the triumph of the Holy Ones who have gone before us into the Church Triumphant, or heaven; on All Souls' Day (November 2nd) we return to the same altar to pray for our beloved dead at a general Requiem Mass.

It must be a matter of infinite consolation for those of us who know that we shall depart this life neither truly good enough for Heaven nor bad enough for Hell, that a season of grace is provided us in which the stains and imperfections still attached to our souls may be brought to perfection. This is called Paradise, or the Church Expectant. The Church has believed and taught that through our prayers we may aid the faithful departed as

they climb those last remaining steps to the throne of God, as we prayed for them when they were still with us in this life, the Church militant. Thus, in our own Anglican liturgy we express the Church's ancient faith when, in the Prayer for the Church, we bless God's "holy name for all (His) servants departed this life in (His) faith and fear, beseeching (Him) to grant them continual

growth in (His) love and service." The traditional practice of the Church is a running stream of witness to her belief in intercession for the faithful departed.

We are never closer to our own blessed dead than when we are at worship in the Eucharist, and especially when we come to the altar rail to receive Holy Communion, for there the whole communion of saints approach the throne of God with all the angels and archangels. Be sure to come to Holy Communion on these two important days, All Saints' Day and All Soul's Day as we honor the great saints of Christ's Church and the holy souls who have gone before us into the next life. ✠

Ed. Note: This article was written by the Rev'd Canon James R. Daughtry and is reprinted by permission.



PARISH NEWS & UPDATES: *Please note these important items!*

Altar Guild Help

The altar guild is in tremendous need of a person to oversee the care of the linens used for Mass. Tammy Jones faithfully did this for years, but now that she has moved away we need a replacement. Note that the person in charge of linens, while a member of the altar guild, is not responsible for setting up or taking down the altar for Mass. All he or she does is launder and fold the linens, which include: purificators, corporals, lavabo towels, and on occasion the fair white linen that covers the altar. Every other week or so, the person should collect the soiled items, take them home, and wash and fold them, and then return them to church. Training for this will be provided. That is all it takes! It is a very easy way to help the church with something that is absolutely vital to her life and ministry. Please let Father Anderson know immediately if you would like to have this important job. Thank you!

Vestry Nominations

Tom Dixon and Daniel Kelly are rotating off of the vestry. Thanks to both men for their excellent service over the past three years! Nominated by the vestry to replace them are Dora Nyborg (8 a.m. service) and Chikwelu Umeh (10 a.m. service). Dora is a widow who remains very active in animal (mostly pugs) rescue. She serves on the altar guild and participates in just about every activity we offer or have offered over the years. Originally from Massachusetts, Dora has lived here in Maryland for many years. Chikwelu Umeh is a nurse at Sinai Hospital and, in another life, was a civil engineer. He is married to Aadaeze, a pharmacist, and together they have two beautiful children, Nede and Kaima, who are very active in Sunday school. Chikwelu comes from a very devout Anglican family in Nigeria and has a brother who is a priest. He has served on vestry before and we are delighted to have him back!

Daily Mass

Saint Alban's will now offer Mass on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at noon. Please avail yourself of these services from time to time, as the Mass is the main offering of the Church to God the Father, offered in union with Jesus, our great high priest. Note: Prayer Book Holy Day Communion services will still be celebrated with Morning Prayer at 10:00 a.m. on the proper day that they fall until further notice.

Annual Meeting and Brunch

Remember that on Sunday, November 20th we will have one 9:00 a.m. service followed by a covered dish brunch and our annual meeting. Please be sure to make it out for this important event. Last this arrangement worked very well for us in terms of getting people from both services out to participate in the meeting. Please sign up to bring a dish to share with everyone else. A sign up sheet is in the parish hall.

Pledging, Pledge Cards, and Tithing

This year we will not be giving out pledge cards as it seems to be a pointless exercise. Many are not returned, and it they don't actually help with the budget process. We simply ask that you continue to give as you are able, and if possible to increase your regular giving so we can keep up with increased expenses here at the church. The biblical standard of giving is the "tithe" which is Hebrew for "tenth"... ten percent. That was what God commanded his people to give back to him of what they made. Anything over and above a tithe is called an "offering." The tithe is what we should aim for. Not everyone is able to do it right away, but it is something we can try to incrementally work towards. Thank you for your generous giving to Saint Alban's Church, and please keep it up so we have the resources to expand our ministry and mission.

Missions Minute

Did you know that the Anglican Province of America has missionary partnerships in Haiti, Ecuador, India, and the Philippines? We operate schools, medical missions, and of course churches. We also train clergy and provide them with transportation and salaries. We provide salaries for teachers at the parochial schools, and sponsor poor children so they may attend these schools. In each of the four quarters of 2017 the hope is to collect funds to send to one of these four mission regions. Keep your eyes peeled for announcements and information about how you can help spread the Gospel of Christ to those in need in other parts of the world.

Reminders

"The minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are still in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, and, when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and other charitable uses." (BCP, p. 320) ✠