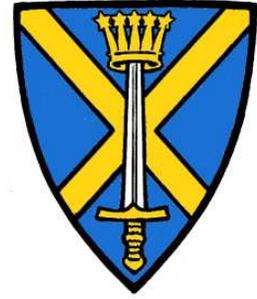


The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

As most of you know I studied classical guitar in college. My first teacher was Dr. Mario Abril, a well-known Cuban musician, arranger, and composer on the faculty of the University of Tennessee. He had a formidable musical pedigree, having studied guitar under the famed Hector Garcia and Julian Bream. For my lessons Dr. Abril told me to buy "Las Primeras Lecciones de Guitarra" by a man called Julio Sagreras to use for my lessons. Sagreras (1879-1942) was an extremely successful and well known Argentinian guitarist and composer. The book I was using—the first of a six volume set that he wrote—was and still is considered a masterpiece of classical guitar pedagogy... and probably the greatest modern method ever developed. It has been said that the book is so methodical that a student could actually teach himself to play the instrument by going through every one of the lessons in the series by himself. For some reason, though, Dr. Abril had me only go through the first book before switching me to a volume from another collection. Later I transferred and ended up studying with a guy a from the Peabody Conservatory, and so I basically never looked at Sagreras again until a few years ago, when I decided it would be fun to buy the complete series of his lessons and go through each of them. Since the exercises in the first book were so beautiful (I still use them to warm up) the ones in the later books must be even better. So I went through the first three books and have begun the fourth. Well lately I decided to pull out some of my other books to relearn old pieces by other composers and learn some new pieces by Bach. And guess what I discovered? *Playing through the basic exercises in the Sagreras books greatly improved my ability and technique!* This is also true in the spiritual life. So often, if we just go back to the *basics* of our *religious* life such as the Creeds, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, the Sacraments, the Prayer Book, etc., and we immerse ourselves in them and wrestle with and study them, we find ourselves better equipped to handle the larger spiritual problems with which we deal. We find that what was once hard to handle is now doable because we've spent time going back to *basics* of our faith, and reacquainting ourselves with the first principles of our faith and practice. So let us never neglect the basics in the spiritual life but rather always go back to them and have *them* mastered so we can then master the harder stuff that comes along.

Faithfully, your priest, *J. Gordon Anderson*

October 2019

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Updates from the Church

UPCOMING SERVICES:

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.

Nov 2nd - All Souls' Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 21st - Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 28th - Thanksgiving Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Nov 30th - St. Andrew

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 18th - Ember Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 20th - Ember Day

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Dec 21st - St. Thomas

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

FOR ALL THE SAINTS: *Saint Raphael the Archangel, October 24th*

Hot off the heels of Michaelmass, the feast of St. Michael and All Angels, which fell on a Sunday this year (September 29th), we get ready to observe the feast of another archangel, St. Raphael, whose day is October 24th.

In Christian tradition we have the so-called “nine choirs of angels.” These are laid out for us musically in the great hymn “Vigiles Et Sancti” otherwise known as “Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones.” (Hymn 599 in the 1940 Hymnal) The nine choirs are: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Princedoms, Powers, Virtues, Archangels, and Angels.

Michael and Raphael are two of the Archangels. The other two are Gabriel and Uriel. Each of these angels are mentioned in the Bible. Michael and Gabriel are probably the best known to us, because they are mentioned in the canonical scriptural books of Daniel, Jude, Revelation, Matthew, and Luke. Raphael and Uriel are mentioned in the Apocrypha, which, as the Articles of Religion remind us, are part of our spiritual heritage.

St. Michael, whose feast we just observed, is found in both the Old and New Testaments. He is viewed as the head of the angels by many, probably due to his prominent role in scripture. St. Gabriel is the angel of the Annunciation. He it was who appeared to Mary and Joseph, and who announced the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Uriel is mentioned only briefly in 2 Esdras chapters 4, 5, and 10. (Ed. Note: There is a very famous Anglo-Catholic parish of the Episcopal Church in Sea Girt, NJ named for St. Uriel, and here at St. Alban's we had, for a number of years until they relocated to South Carolina, a fantastic family who had grown up in that august and orthodox parish!)

St. Raphael, whose feast is this month, is the other of the four archangels. His name means, “God has healed.” The Medieval Church always identified him with the angel who troubled the waters of the healing pool in John 5:1-4, even though St. John himself does not name the angel. Raphael too, like Uriel, is found only in the Apocrypha, but unlike him St. Raphael is a major

character in the book of Tobit. The following is a summary of the book of Tobit taken from “Inside the Bible” by Kenneth Baker, S.J. (1998, Ignatius Press)

“Tobit is a pious Jew who is deported from Israel to Ninevah in Assyria after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. There he is persecuted for practicing the good works of a pious man, such as burying the dead. One night he returns home after burying a dead man and cannot enter the house because he is unclean, so he sleeps outside against the wall of the house. Bird droppings fall on his eyes, and he is blinded. He accepts this in patience. At the same time, far away in Ecbatana in Persia, Sarah, a young relative, is afflicted by the demon Asmodeus who causes the death of seven husbands in a row. Like Tobit, she prays that God will take her life from her. Thinking he will die soon, Tobit sends his son Tobias to collect a debt from his kinsman Gabael, which he intends to give to his son as his inheritance. Tobias meets the angel Raphael, whom he thinks is his cousin Azarias, and Raphael agrees to accompany him on the journey to Rages (Ed. Note: a suburb of modern day Tebran). Tobias catches a big fish, and Raphael tells him how to use the fish to cure both Sarah and Tobit, his father. Tobias falls in love with Sarah, marries her and rives out the demon; then he returns home and cures his father's blindness with the gall of the fish. Raphael reveals who he is and refuses any reward. Tobit sings a song of praise and thanksgiving to God and prophesies a glorious future for Jerusalem.”

Based on this outline of the story of Raphael from the book of Tobit one can see why his “patronage” is what it is. He is traditionally a patron saint of: pharmacists, physicians, and nurses; marriage; blind people; people suffering from bodily ills (sick people); happy meetings; people suffering from insanity, mental illness, and people suffering from nightmares; lovers; healing; shepherds; travelers; and young people.

Very interestingly, St. Raphael is revered not only in the Christian tradition but also in the Jewish and Islamic traditions, which makes sense, because the Church came out of the Jewish people, and Islam was a heresy that developed out of Christianity but retained certain characters of the Jewish and Christian religions, such as the angels and other saints. That is all fine and well. But we Christians still claim St. Raphael as our own! ✠

PARISH LIFE: *Building Plan Update*

Our building and expansion plan is slowly and steadily moving along. Here is where we are now. Having had our percolation tests done several months ago our engineering firm has been able to determine how we can expand our parking and facilities.

We basically want to do the following things: add parking; reclaim the entire 1914 schoolhouse structure for our church (adding seats); relocate the kitchen and bathrooms (updating both); bring the concrete handicap ramp up to code and tie it into the new handicap ramp that was built a few years ago, then tie both into the new parking area; create an entrance into the parish hall from the ramp; add an escape hatch to the basement so we can finish it and use it for office/classroom space; add a small wing off of the existing parish hall for office space; create a prayer/meditation garden/courtyard.

Ironically this plan is very similar to what was proposed some twelve years ago under then-rector Fr. Raymond Unterburger. At this point, however, all of this stuff is only in the conception/dream phase because we have to address some basic engineering questions first.

Suffice it to say, plans for building an entire new wing and having that serve as the church do not seem feasible at this point given the limitations with our land. It is impossible to just “build a new church”, or any other building for that matter, on a piece of land as there are numerous county and state regulations with which to comply.

Because of the poor drainage in our septic field we can only expand up to certain point. More seats in the church require more parking... the rule is something like: for every three seats there must be an additional parking space. So if we want to build a church that seats, say, 250 people we have to plan for the right number of parking spaces to coincide with that.

Adding parking spaces leads immediately to storm water management issues. The more seats and parking spaces there are the more complex the storm water management issues become. So what we want to try to do is get the maximum number

of seats we can without triggering excessively expensive storm water management problems. So at this point we are aiming to expand our seating to accommodate somewhere in the neighborhood of 130 people max at a service. This seems to be the “magic number”, as it were, as it will allow us the *maximum* seating with *minimal* storm water management requirements.

So the engineers are now looking at the storm water management stuff as it relates to our desired seating and parking requirements. What we would have to do is create one or two “overflow” pond areas so that storm water could drain into that, and from there be pushed out into the pipe under Old Joppa Road. These would likely go out in the field between us and the neighboring houses. They would be beautifully landscaped, and probably make that otherwise barren and marshy field look very nice.

Once we get everything figured out we then have to draw up plans for everything (this would *not* yet include a building) and submit it to the county for approval. Only *then* can we begin to engage an architect to help us with designs for our actual building. The senior warden estimates that it could take about a year to get that point.

So we need to pray! We need to pray that the engineers can adequately address the storm water management concerns and that everything will come together for our plans to be approved by the appropriate officials in a year so we can then move forward with our much needed and long overdue building plans. Please pray that God blesses us and helps us get this done so we can expand our ministry in Harford County and beyond.

And please continue to give to our building fund. We have to pay for all of this preliminary work and then the design work and then the construction costs, and so on and so forth. And we could easily be looking at 75-100k for all of that. Thank you for your generosity thus far! Please keep it coming.

God has blessed us so far in this dream project! We look forward to him bringing it to completion (Philippians 1:6) for his honor and glory! ✠

PARISH NEWS & UPDATES:

Seminarian UpdateAUTUMNAL EMBERTIDE LETTER TO
BISHOP GRUNDORF

by Mr. Mason Waldhauser.

When Dear Bp. Grundorf,

As I begin my senior, I find myself feeling more and more grateful for my time here at Nashotah House and for the opportunity I've had to discern my vocation under your care and oversight. Taking this opportunity to fill you in on my life since synod, I just wanted to update you on what I have been learning so far this semester and how I am feeling as I prepare for my ordination next month.

My class schedule is lighter this semester than in previous semesters since I completed all my elective credits the past two years, so I am only taking the Chapel Practicum, Homiletics II, Systematics I, and Pastoral Ministry II. This last class has proven to be the most helpful to me so far, and I just finished writing a personal reflection in response to our readings and lectures on the nature of Christian priesthood. Here is what has struck me from our class so far as I summarized my three points in my paper:

1) Although I still feel called to the sacramental ministry, I am realizing that God's desire behind this is ultimately to care for the souls of his people;

2) that although there is an ontological authority in the nature of Christian priesthood, because of its pastoral mission its authority in the relationships of the parish must come from trust as its source; and

3) although the nature of Christian priesthood is fixed and unchanging in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, in whom it participates, its expression must be adaptable in order to meet the needs of real congregations. So I have felt several paradigm-shifts recently in my understanding of this ministry and a fresh love for Christ's Church, not only considered as an institution, but also as his family, and have found a new appreciation for the value of the care for their souls. Therefore the Ordinal says to the newly-ordained priest, "[H]ow great a treasure is

committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood."

As I prepare for my ordination to the diaconate, I am thinking through what it will be like to serve as a deacon when, although I will have the liturgical expression of this ministry in chapel this year, I will yet be away from my home parish. I look forward to a conversation with Fr. Gordon and Bp. Chad about their advice in these circumstances, as I want to be faithful to the whole vocation of what it means to be a deacon, and not just see it as the on-ramp to priesthood. If there is any way you need me to exercise that vocation in your diocese in these upcoming months, please let me know how I can serve. I hope to be very intentional during my breaks when I'm home to be of help to Fr. Gordon, and in the mean time, to be helpful to the Continuing parishes around here.

Thank you for your willingness to allow me to become a clergyman in your diocese. It feels surreal to know that ordained ministry is no longer a question of "if" but of "when" and that I will be able to serve Christ's Church in this way.

Regarding the practicalities of work in the future, I look forward to getting Bp. Chad's input when he and I are together in person next month. Bp. Scarlett and I have kept in touch and are moving forward in pursuing work in his diocese, and I will be visiting St. Mary's, Denver again this Advent IV through Christmas to discuss curacy there after I graduate, to meet the vestrymen and wardens, and to preach and serve. I welcome any advice you might have for me as I move closer to ordained ministry in a parish context.

I was very glad to hear that the recent hurricane in large part missed you there in Orlando. I look forward to seeing you again this February. Thank you for everything, Your Grace, and especially for your prayers for me as I prepare for ordination. You remain in my prayers here at the House.

Warmly,
Mason Waldhauser