



# *The Anglican Catholic Chronicle*

*Newsletter of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada  
A Province of the Traditional Anglican Communion*

## NOVEMBER 2012

OUR Church Year now draws to its close. We enter into the last Sundays in Trinitytide, leading to the Sunday Next Before Advent. In this month we celebrate the end of the Church's liturgical year. We will celebrate All Saints and commemorate All Souls. In the midst of the month we will pause to remember those who gave the 'last great measure of devotion', those who served and died for the cause of peace and freedom against tyranny and evil. As with these feasts and commemorations, the Epistles and Gospels of the end of the Church Year speak to us of the last things: Death and Judgement, Heaven or Hell.

Our lives in this world are full of uncertainties. Shall I live many years or few? Shall I accomplish this or that? Shall I have more of happiness or of sorrow, of success or of failure, of fame or of obscurity? We cannot tell, or even guess with much probability of being right. But there is no uncertainty about death. Depending upon our age, we may find it difficult to realize our own mortality. For most people, death seems far away. But it may be much nearer that any of us thinks. For most of us, we have already lived in the world much longer than a large portion of the human race; and how quickly the years have slipped away.

As Christians the thought of death should neither consume our daily lives nor ought it be unwelcome to us -- for living or dying we belong to Christ. For us death is but a consummation of our life of commitment, sacrifice and service to God in Christ. A sacrifice we have already made in our hearts and our souls. To die to the world, to give up ourselves, and to give all to God, should be our *raison d'être*.

But if we are to have confidence in the hour of death, then we must make the whole of our lives a preparation for death. Our souls should constantly keep free from the entanglements of selfishness and sin, and from all inordinate attachments to passing things. Our hearts need to keep watch from all that might tarnish purity,

so that with purity of heart we may see God. At the end of each day we should be able to look back upon its hours, that they were well spent -- time in prayer in which our soul was really seeking after God, and rising up to Him -- even though we may have been buffeted by doubt or temptation or the distractions of our lives. It is in practicing to die daily to self and to sin that you and I will find the secure way to a happy and holy death at the last.

The splendid guess of Euripides: 'Who knows if this life be not death, and death the real life?', which was greeted with ridicule by the comic poets of his time, has become for us Christians an assured truth, not only in its ultimate realization in the life to come, but in our daily experience. As we daily die to self and sin, each of us will find an entrance into a higher, richer, fuller life in Christ.

We know not the hour when death shall come, there may be a time of darkness and temptation, even of doubt and fear, as the end draws near -- but God promises us that He will not suffer us to fall from Him. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. If we have lived for Him, if we have given our life to Christ, if we have repented of our sins and turned away from evil, then we have nothing to fear. At the hour of death we shall be safe in the Hands of God: The Hands that made us, the Hands that have guided us through life; the Hands that were pierced for us upon the Cross, the Hands that have so often been outstretched in comfort and blessing.

We should not, then, be troubled as to when or how death may come. It will come when God wills; and we may be sure, if we love Him above all else, that it will be at the best time and in the best way.

*O God our heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: Grant us grace to desire only thy most holy will; that, whether living or dying, we may be thine; for his sake who loved us and gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**T**HE Christian Faith, the Christian way of life, is totally different than any other. The Christian faith and life is one founded upon and lived out by the grace of God, before the Cross of Christ, in the love of God and neighbour. As Christians we hold fast to the truth revealed and received in God's holy Word. We express our faith not only in how and where we worship, but Whom we worship, and in the manner and morals of our lives. Christ is the centre of our lives, the focus of our love, and the foundation upon which we "live and move and have our being." As Christians we recognize and accept that living out our faith will be demanding, sometimes uncomfortable; that being obedient to God demands strength of character, moral fibre, and the willingness to put others before self. It requires the whole of our lives and all our choices and decisions to be reached through the prism of God's commandments and abiding love. Being a Christian is not easy; the Christian way of life is not for the faint of heart, nor for the 'fair weather friend'. Yet is it the only way of life, the only Faith, which leads to personal fulfillment, lasting peace, and everlasting life.

Unlike many of the 'new age' religions or the eastern philosophies which seem to come and go in popularity, the Christian Faith is consistently, steadfastly lived within the framework of a Christ-centred devotion, a Christ-centred moral code, and a Christ-centred meaning for life and purpose for one's own unique presence and being. The choices we make, the lifestyle we live, the friends we have, the family we nurture, are all reflections of this Christian framework that defines who we are as Christian men and women.

Our way of life as Christians, Saint Paul reminds us, is not of this world, it is not based upon the things of this world. Our faith is an expression of God's self-revelation in Christ, and springs from a fundamental realization of who we are, why we are here, and where we are going. The three basic questions of human existence.

In living as Christians in our contemporary time and place, Saint Paul reminds us too that there can be no place in our lives for lies, no harbouring of grudges, no dishonesty, no spitefulness, no malice, gossip or slander. Nor can there be room for lust, or greed, or violence, cruelty or selfishness. In the place of such worldly ways and reactions comes those

demanding and exhibited by Christ: kindness, gentleness, generosity, patience, understanding, forgiveness, healing, obedience, humility. All of which will exact a cost – for there is a price to be paid by you and me in being a Christian today. That cost may include misunderstanding, ridicule, isolation, persecution, and, by some, even a martyr's death. It means going against the competing interests that seek to take over our lives and our love.

As Christians we need to guard against the drive to make more money or to acquire more goods at the cost of our health or family or more importantly our time with God; to seek popularity at the cost of our integrity; to spending time with friends at the cost of our relationship with God; of career choices and job demands which subtly but effectively take away our time and energy from the things of God and family. The hobby that becomes an obsession, the relationship that distracts from who we are and what we are about, the position or status that seemingly wins us the world but costs our very soul.

These are the real costs, the real temptations, the real dangers, which every Christian must face up to and ultimately conquer. All of which demands of us courage, constancy in our faith, and determination to live out God's plan for our lives – accepting what comes but never giving in to defeat or despair; praying for strength and grace to meet our trials always trusting in God that He will guide us on our way and see us safely through every storm; living always in the hope and joy and love which is uniquely a Christian's promise and strength. Truth, integrity, the power of the Gospel, the sure knowledge of salvation, the eternal promises of God, the abiding faith and enduring prayer of a child of God, these are the tools, the resources, the means, by which we are enabled to build and live our lives centred upon God in the fellowship of Christ and His Church.

There is no other way of life that is worth the living, no better or more fulfilling way to live or to die, than that to live the life God has called you and me to, in Christ Jesus His Son. His pathway is sure, His teachings are true, His love is faithful, His blessings are abundant.



## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

REMEMBRANCE Day this year falls on Sunday. Once more we will mark 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month with two minute of silence, as we pause to remember those who gave “the last great measure of devotion” on the battlefields of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

In the year of our Lord 1918, hostilities ended along the western front of Europe. The guns ceased their firing and the soldiers their fighting, and the ‘war to end all wars’ finally came to an end. Out of this terrible war came the symbol of our remembrance, the red Poppy; from which came also John McCrae’s haunting poem, *In Flanders Field*. Canada gave of her sons almost a 10<sup>th</sup> of her population – 85,000 dead and wounded. A whole generation of young men was gone. And those who did return home bore in their hearts, and minds, and bodies, the scars of battle. They returned home from the ‘war to end all wars’ to a country ‘fit for heroes’, or so the politicians of the day would have them believe. Unfortunately, November 1918 did not mark the end of all wars; nor had the combatant nations become ‘countries fit for heroes’. Within a generation, those same soldiers watched their sons march off to fight yet another world war, many never to return home.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century has come to be known as the bloodiest and most costly century in human history. And the 21<sup>st</sup> century does not appear to be getting any better. Countries, including Canada, are still calling their young men and women to fields of battle. War and aggression still play their part in the conflict of nations. Old soldiers, veterans of previous wars, look out with sad eyes at the cost of war being bought and paid for by the young today.

To be sure there are times and seasons when men of good will must step forward and answer the call to fight against evil, totalitarian aggression, genocide, and hatred. And their sacrifice, their courage, their bravery, must never be forgotten nor easily dismissed. It was, and remains still, the desire for freedom and peace which draws the hearts of men and women to face evil and tyranny on the field of battle. To those who have given their lives for our freedom and peace, we offer our eternal gratitude; to those who stand watch for us today at home and in far off lands, we offer our thanksgiving and our prayers.

Yet in our remembering, we should not only give thanks for the memory of our fallen dead but also pause to consider the causes of war and the need to seek peaceful means in dealing with conflicts between peoples and nations. War is not something to be glorified or to be looked back upon with nostalgia. War is painful, destructive, insensitive, and indiscriminating. It takes the very young as well as the very old. War is a symptom of man’s fall from grace; it is part of sin and evil, which we are called upon to confront, to resist as much as lies in us, and by God’s grace and guidance to seek peace even in the face of aggression. Holy Scripture reveals to us that God’s ways are ways of peace and justice, of mercy and reconciliation. We are called by God to be a people of peace not of violence; we are called upon to seek every means possible to promote peace and reconciliation, both in our own lives and in the life of the world. As a nation and people we should be slow to resort to arms, seeking first the pathway to peace.

Yet in our love of peace we must not be afraid to stand up and fight against hatred, tyranny, injustice, and the enslavement of the weak – for evil cannot go unchecked. In *John 15:13*, Jesus tells His disciples: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Sometimes sacrifice and the call to arms are necessary as we seek to extend to others the blessings we enjoy as Christians and Canadians.

On this Remembrance Day, let us pray for those in our world intent on the pursuit of war and the promotion of hatred; for those terrorists and their leaders filled with hatred, that they may turn away from evil and seek for the true face of God, the God not of hatred but of love, not of vengeance but of reconciliation, not of war but of peace. We pray too for those who take counsel for the nations, that peace and justice, mercy and reconciliation may be the watchwords of their foreign policy.

Finally, as we pause to remember and give thanks for those brave men and women who stood in harms way through the violent wars of our past century, and those who bravely stand guard for us today, may we never take for granted the freedoms or peace which their sacrifice and service have made possible. May we always remember those whose memory is ‘forever hallowed in the land they loved’.



...from  
MAGGIE'S  
KITCHEN

**Y**EARS and years ago, I heard a riveting talk by Fr. William Ralston of Savannah, Georgia, on the Book of Judges. Judges, he said, presents a ghastly series of events in the life of Israel between the time of Joshua and the anointing of the first king, Saul. In depressing succession, idolatries lead to sinful behaviors, which lead to national disasters. Even Gideon, hero that he is, follows this pattern. With the spoils of war, he made an ephod (a kind of image or idol), before which the people “played the harlot” and which “became a snare” to Gideon and his family. Enough said, you can read all about it yourself in chapter 8. Or listen to the evening news for the same sort of thing. What brings the Book of Judges to my mind (other than the evening news) is the article in *Butler's Lives* on St. Bartholomew, Abbot, who died in AD 1050

This Bartholomew was obviously born in the 900's, since he was a follower of St. Nilus, who died in 1004. I don't know anything more about his birth or early years, only that he became attached to the Greek abbey Nilus had founded at Grottaferrata in the region of Tuscany, Italy. Nilus and his first two successors had cleared the land and begun building, but times were tough, and the monks of the abbey were scattered thither and yon by Saracen (Moslem) invaders. Bartholomew, the third successor as abbot, was able to complete the building and gather the monks back to Grottaferrata. Under Bartholomew, the abbey became a centre of learning and of manuscript copying. He himself was a skilled calligrapher, as well as the composer of a number of liturgical hymns.

People in our day, I think, show little appreciation for the work these monks and others like them did. We dismiss their times as “the dark ages”, even though they showed greater respect for learning and books -- and for God -- than we do in our own supposedly enlightened age. We even sneer at their celibacy, as if it were something unnatural -- and as if we weren't ourselves plagued with the consequences of “free” sex. Those monks were a civilizing influence from which we still benefit -- though for how long, God only knows -- shades of Judges!

But what really brought Judges to my mind was another figure in this account of Bartholomew: Pope Benedict IX. The pope's grandfather, Count Gregory of Tusculum, had donated the land on which the abbey of Grottaferrata was built. So when the pope fell into disgrace after a “stormy and scandalous reign” of twelve years (his downfall came when he took a bribe to resign from the papacy and then tried to buy his way back), it was natural enough that he should retreat to Grottaferrata. There Bartholomew took him firmly in hand, telling Benedict that he had made himself unfit to be a priest, let alone a pope. He was to resign all claims, become a simple monk, and spend the remainder of his life doing penance. Remorse gradually became penitence, though the process was never quite complete for in the year of his death, 1055, five years after Bartholomew's, he still called himself “pope”.

Before his own death, Bartholomew succeeded in making his monastery a place of great importance, with considerable influence on the history of the mediaeval papal states. As you might however guess from the Book of Judges, this same importance became a snare to succeeding generations of monks, and the abbey entered a long period of decline. Only in the nineteenth century was it restored, returning to the saintly examples of its founders, Nilus and Bartholomew. If you go there today, you will be able to see an ancient mosaic of these two men, and may even be allowed to view some of the manuscripts Bartholomew copied by hand, now stored in the abbey's library.

An idea from Tuscany for the day which St. Bartholomew of Grottaferrata shares with St. Martin of Tours, November 11:

RIBOLLITA

*In English, “reboiled” soup. This is peasant fare, so use whatever you have on hand in the way of vegetables, till you find a combination you like. Proportions aren't important. Dice an onion, mince 2 cloves of garlic; saute in 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil until wilted. Chop up or thinly slice other vegetables (spinach or chard, green beans, cabbage, carrots) and add to pan. Add several peeled, seeded and chopped fresh tomatoes, 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil (or basil-marjoram mixture), and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer while you slice a baguette thinly and toast. Spread toast with a mixture of olive oil and mashed garlic; layer with vegetables in a deep casserole. Pour 4 cups homemade seasoned chicken broth over all; top generously with freshly-grated Parmesan cheese. Bake in 350 oven till bubbling hot.*