



The Anglican Catholic Chronicle

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

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2014



A Message from the House of Bishops

AS the Church enters the liturgical season of Advent it won't have passed your notice that Walmart and the advertising industry seem to have been weeks ahead of us. Before the task of raking our autumn leaves was complete Shopping Centres began playing Christmas music. The decorations are up and the mood has been set to have us focus on this most sentimental of holidays, not for any religious purpose, but to empty our bank accounts as we shop our way towards December 25th.

Christmas is a nostalgic time of warmth, and peace, and happiness for many and so it is easy to be drawn into this trap set by retailers. But as Christians we know that Advent precedes Christmas, and it does a disservice to the liturgical season of Advent to use it as a warm up and period of preparation for Christmas.

Advent has its own deeply meaningful music. We begin this season not with "Joy to the World", but rather "O Come, O Come Emmanuel". Advent means "the coming", or "the arrival", and while we celebrate the coming of the Messiah as the Babe of Bethlehem during the Christmas season, during the season of Advent we anticipate and prepare for another coming of Jesus Christ. At Christmas we celebrate something which has already occurred – Jesus' birth and our salvation. Advent, however involves the anticipation of a future event.

The Latin word "adventus" from which we get the name of this season does mean "the coming", but itself is a translation of the Greek word "parousia", which when used in the original Greek language in which the Bible was written, refers to the Second Coming of Christ. Thus Advent is a time of penitential preparation for the return of our Lord at the end of time, when He will judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. Advent is a time to arise from the darkness of sin and despair, to awake from the sleep of lethargy and inaction, and to prepare our souls for that great and terrible day.

All of the scriptures chosen for this liturgical season shout with urgency: prepare yourselves! Focus on what is important. By examination of conscience, prayer, and meditation, and taking our part in the corporate worship offered by the Church, we can focus on what truly matters. Not the turkey and the presents and the wrapping paper, but our souls and where they will spend eternity.

We pray each of you will use this season the Church has given us, to reflect upon and make the changes necessary in your lives to be prepared for the coming of Jesus Christ.

A blessed, prayerful and joyous Season to you all as we look in hope to the coming of our Saviour Christ in time and eternity.

+Shane B. Janzen
Canada West

+Craig Botterill
Canada East



*Advent:
A Season of Prayer
by
Bishop Craig Botterill*

MOST of the prayer in the Anglican Church, as with other branches of the Catholic Church, is “corporate”. These are prayers which we say together when we meet for worship. A priest leads us in reciting scripted prayers. Our participation in this public worship is important for our spiritual life, and is commanded by scripture, but sadly it is the only form of prayer that many people engage in. Each Christian must also learn to pray on their own as individuals.

Some people never bother to pray as individuals and others give it a try and give up using self-deceiving rationalizations such as:

- "I don't need to pray in any 'formal' sense. God knows I love him."
- "I just can't find the time to pray."
- "My faith isn't deep enough to get anything out of prayer."
- "I've tried learning how to pray, but I just don't 'get it'. It's too hard."

These myths are deceptions. A private prayer life is **essential** to the Christian life. Prayer is “a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God”. Prayer is the lifeblood of your faith. Without prayer, your faith will die.

So how do we pray? When do we pray? What do we pray?

Learning to pray is like learning to ski or learning to run a marathon. If you strap on your brand new skis and take the chair lift up to the tallest hill and hurl yourself down you will not learn to ski and when you are released from hospital you will never venture onto the slopes again. If a new found zeal for running sees you enter the Boston Marathon, only to collapse in a fit of wheezing three blocks into the race you will quit in frustration.

SO START SIMPLE. Many Christians who have decided to learn individual prayer jump right into the deep end, keeping prayer diaries, buying every book on prayer, going on silent retreats, and setting aside hours each day to pray. In so doing they see little result, become frustrated, and quickly burn themselves out. Then they quit praying.

Begin with something as simple as disciplining yourself to offer a simple prayer every morning that you wake from sleep. You don't need to get up and light a candle by an icon and kneel. When you first open your eyes and you begin to clear the fog from your mind and as you lay in bed simply think of God and speak to Him. Your prayer can be as simple as:

- “Good Morning God”, or
- “Lord I will serve you today”, or
- “Lord, help me love and serve you today”, or
- “Lord, thank-you for guarding me through the night and safely bringing me to beginning of this new day.”

Pick something simple that you can remember and that resonates with you so that you say it from your heart and discipline yourself to say it upon waking each day.

Once you are up and about try to find time each morning, or each evening, or both, to open your Book of Common Prayer and to pray one of the prescribed prayers found in the section: “Prayers for Families” that begin on page 728. Here is an example of a structured morning prayer from that section:

O GOD, thou art my God, early will I seek thee. In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

OUR Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

I give thee hearty thanks, O heavenly Father, for the rest of the past night, and for the gift of a new day. Grant that I may so pass its hours in the perfect freedom of thy service, that at eventide I may again give thanks unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD God, who hast bidden light to shine out of darkness, and who hast again wakened me to praise thee for thy goodness and to ask for thy grace: Accept now the offering of my worship and thanksgiving, and grant unto me all such requests as may be acceptable to thy holy will. Make me to live as a child of the light, and heir of thy everlasting kingdom. Remember, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy mercies, thy whole Church, all who join with me in prayer, and all my brethren, wherever they may be, who stand in need of thine aid. Pour down upon me all the riches of thy grace, so that, redeemed in soul and body, and stedfast in faith, I may ever praise thy wonderful and holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*O God, Most High and Holy, Three in One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
I offer to thee this day
Myself, my soul and body,
To be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee;
To whom be all praise and glory. Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with me evermore. Amen.

The reason to recite a structured prayer from the Prayer Book is to prepare yourself to then pray your private prayers. A structured prayer, like the example above, helps you to clear your mind of distracting thoughts and to “centre” yourself on the conversation with God that will follow. This is the time to “make time” to pray. No matter how busy a person is, no matter how many screaming children may be visiting or other excuse, each of us can find 5 minutes out of each 1,440 minutes that comprise each day, to do this. If opportunity allows find a place and posture that you are most comfortable with. If you can put up a little framed icon and light a candle

and sit comfortably in a dimly lit room that will help, but it is not necessary. Some find kneeling a distraction to private prayer. If it helps, great, if it doesn't then sit, stand, walk in the garden, whatever helps you to focus your thoughts on your prayers.

Having cleared your mind and prepared and centred yourself with a structured prayer, try to follow this simple pattern each time you pray. Study and commit to memory (through daily practise) the following “hand” analogy or formula suggested by the Church of England:



Use your **hand**. Your fingers can be used to bring to mind different things to pray for.

Thumb this is the strongest digit on your hand. Give thanks for all the strong things in your life, like home and family, your church, relationships that support and sustain you.

Index finger this is the pointing finger. Pray for all those people and things in your life who guide and help you. Friends, clergy, teachers, doctors, nurses, emergency services and so on.

Middle finger this is the tallest finger. Pray for all the important people who have power in the world, like world leaders and their governments, members of parliament and local councillors, the Royal Family, other world leaders and their governments.

Ring finger this is the weakest finger on your hand. It cannot do much by itself. Remember the poor, the weak, the helpless, the hungry, the sick, the ill and the bereaved.

Little finger this is the smallest and the last finger on your hand. Pray for yourself.

How do you pray for yourself? Be honest. Tell God that you know you have sinned and are less than perfect and that you need His help and assistance to be healthy and whole. Tell Him what troubles you. Give Him your

anxieties. Ask Him to lift them from your shoulders and carry them for you. Tell Him when you are angry and hurt. Ask him for forgiveness and healing and strength. Pour your heart out. This is not the time to put on your Sunday best and to pray to be seen, this is what Jesus spoke of when His disciples asked him to teach them to pray and He responded that they should “go into your closet and pray to your Father in secret”. These are your most intimate thoughts, your joys, your sorrows, your worries. Just you and God, no one standing around to impress.

You will find over time that following this discipline (yes I know people don't like that word, but remember the analogy of exercise and preparing for a sport or race) you will find the words to say to God. And don't forget when you come to your little finger and you begin to pray for yourself to ask in humble petition: “God, help me to pray”!

Besides the daily routine of private prayer that I've outlined above, talk to God throughout the day. Routine communication with God will become comfortable and relaxed as you go about your day. “Lord, this is my third time around the block, please show me a vacant parking space”, “Lord, you must have a sense of humour because I pray for you to help me love others and you have sent me this difficult person!” and so on. Constant “talking in your head” to God is not a symptom of a mental illness, it is a symptom of holiness.

It is also helpful, as 17th century Anglican theologian Jeremy Taylor taught, to frequently, throughout the day, offer spontaneous short structured prayers to God. Walking up the stairs with the laundry basket? Well you have time before you reach where you are going to recite something in your head that is familiar such as the Lord's Prayer, or

“Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and the hour of our death, Amen.”, or

“Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”, or

The “Jesus Prayer” recited by the Eastern Orthodox: *“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.”*

The secret here is to simply recite something on the spur of the moment that keeps open your communication with God and returns your mind several times during the day to Him.

Finally, returning to the structure of daily private prayer, when you have become comfortable with the routine outlined above, consider adding (slowly) other prayer activities, such as reading Compline to yourself as you lay in bed and before you turn off the light. It is found on page 722 of the Book of Common Prayer. It is the prayer that monks have offered before turning into bed for nearly two thousand years. There are many other examples of formal prayers and private ‘liturgies’ you can add to your daily prayer routine, including of course the “Daily Offices” of Morning and Evening Prayer (with their daily prescribed readings from scripture) **but do not take on too much too quickly**, or like the person who thinks they can run the marathon when they are not in shape, you will quickly collapse at your efforts and in frustration avoid even trying to pray in the future.

May God bless you richly and give you inspiration, steadfastness, and faith as you take up the challenge of regular, daily private prayer.

BISHOP BOTTERILL TO ATTEND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SUMMIT

On December 3rd, Bishop Craig Botterill will represent the ACCC at a theological education summit in Athens, Georgia. Attendees will be considering aspects of training for Holy Orders. The summit is being regarded as an opportunity for those who serve Continuing Anglican Churches to come together for discussion, sharing of ideas, and fellowship.



INTO THE DARK WITH GOD

*A Christmas Meditation on the Incarnation
By Hans Urs von Balthasar*

ON Christmas night the shepherds are addressed by an angel who shines upon them with the blinding glory of God, and they are very much afraid. The tremendous, unearthly radiance shows that the angel is a messenger of heaven and clothes him with an incontrovertible authority. With this authority he commands them not to be afraid but to embrace the great joy he is announcing to them. And while the angel is speaking thus to these poor frightened people, he is joined by a vast number of others, who unite in a "Gloria" praising God in heaven's heights and announcing the peace of God's goodwill to men on earth. Then, we read, "the angels went away from them into heaven." In all probability the singing was very beautiful and the shepherds were glad to listen; doubtless they were sorry when the concert was over and the performers disappeared behind heaven's curtain. Probably, however, they were secretly a little relieved when the unwonted light of divine glory and the unwonted sound of heavenly music came to an end, and they found themselves once more in their familiar earthly darkness. They probably felt like shabby beggars who had suddenly been set in a king's audience chamber among courtiers dressed in magnificent robes and were glad to slip away unnoticed and take to their heels.

But the strange thing is that the intimidating glory of the heavenly realm, which has now vanished, has left behind a human glow of joy in their souls, a light of joyous expectation, reinforcing the heavenward-pointing angel's word and causing them to set out for Bethlehem. Now they can turn their backs on the whole

epiphany of the heavenly glory for it was only a starting point, an initial spark, a stimulus leading to what was really intended; all that remains of it is the tiny seed of the word that has been implanted in their hearts and that now starts to grow in the form of expectation, curiosity and hope: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." They want to see the word that has taken place. Not the angel's word with its heavenly radiance: that has already become unimportant. They want to see the content of the angel's word, that is, the Child, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They want to see the word that has "happened", the word that has taken place, the word that is not only something uttered but something done, something that can not only be heard but also seen.

Thus the word that the shepherds want to see is not the angel's word. This was only the proclamation (the kerygma, as people say nowadays); it was only a pointer. The angels, with their heavenly authority, disappear: they belong to the heavenly realm; all that remains is a pointer to a word that has been done. By God, of course. Just as it is God who made it known to them through the angels.

So they set off, heaven behind them, and the earthly sign before them. But, Lord, what a sign! Not even the Child, but a child. Some child or other. No special child. Not a child radiating a light of glory, as the religious painters depicted, but on the contrary: a child that looks as 'inglorious as possible. Wrapped in swaddling clothes. So that it cannot move. It lies there, imprisoned, as it were, in the clothes in which it has been wrapped through the solicitude of others. There is nothing elevating about the manger in which it lies, either, nothing even remotely corresponding to the heavenly glory of the singing angels. There is practically nothing even half worth seeing; the destination of the shepherds' nightly journey is the most ordinary scene. Indeed, in its poverty it is decidedly disappointing. It is something entirely human

and ordinary, something quite profane, in no way distinguished except for the fact that this is the promised sign, and it fits.

The shepherds believe the word. The word sends them from heaven and to earth, and as they proceed along this path, from light to darkness, from the extraordinary to the ordinary, from the solitary experience of God to the realm of ordinary human intercourse, from the splendor above to the poverty below, they are given the confirmation they need: the sign fits. Only now does their fearful joy under heaven's radiance turn into a completely uninhibited, human and Christian joy. Because it fits. And why does it fit? Because the Lord, the High God, has taken the same path as they have: he has left his glory behind him and gone into the dark world, into the child's apparent insignificance, into the unfreedom of human restrictions and bonds, into the poverty of the crib. This is the Word in action, and as yet the shepherds do not know, no one knows, how far down into the darkness this Word-in-action will lead. At all events it will descend much deeper than anyone else into what is worldly, apparently insignificant and profane; into what is bound, poor and powerless; so much so that we shall not be able to follow the last stage of his path. A heavy stone will block the way, preventing the others from approaching, while, in night, in ultimate loneliness and forsakenness, he descends to his dead human brothers.

It is true, therefore: in order that he shall find God, the Christian is placed on the streets of the world, sent to his manacled and poor brethren, to all who suffer, hunger and thirst; to all who are naked, sick and in prison. From henceforth this is his place; he must identify with them all. This is the great joy that is proclaimed to him today, for it is the same way that God sent a Savior to us. We ourselves may be poor and in bondage too, in need of liberation; yet at the same time all of us who have been given a share in the joy of deliverance are sent to be companions of those who are poor and in bondage.

But who will step out along this road that leads from God's glory to the figure of the poor Child lying in the manger? Not the person who is taking a walk for his own pleasure. He will walk along other paths that are more likely to run in the opposite direction, paths that lead from the misery of his own existence toward some imaginary or dreamed-up attempt at a heaven, whether of a brief pleasure or of a long oblivion. The only one to journey from heaven, through the world, to the hell of the lost, is he who is aware, deep in his heart, of a mission to do so; such a one obeys a call that is stronger than his own comfort and his resistance. This is a call that has complete power and authority over my life; I submit to it because it comes from a higher plane than my entire existence. It is an appeal to my heart, demanding the investment of my total self; its hidden, magisterial radiance obliges me, willy-nilly, to submit. I may not know who it is that so takes me into his service. But one thing I do know: if I stay locked within myself, if I seek myself, I shall not find the peace that is promised to the man on whom God's favor rests. I must go. I must enter the service of the poor and imprisoned. I must lose my soul if I am to regain it, for so long as I hold onto it, I shall lose it. This implacable, silent word (which yet is so unmistakable) burns in my heart and will not leave me in peace.

In other lands there are millions who are starving, who work themselves to death for a derisory day's wage, heartlessly exploited like cattle. There too are the slaughtered peoples whose wars cannot end because certain interests (which are not theirs) are tied up with the continuance of their misery. And I know that all my talk about progress and mankind's liberation will be dismissed with laughter and mockery by all the realistic forecasters of mankind's next few decades. Indeed, I only need to open my eyes and ears, and I shall hear the cry of those unjustly oppressed growing louder every day, along with the clamor of those who are resolved to gain power at any price, through hatred and

annihilation. These are the superpowers of darkness; in the face of them all our courage drains away, and we lose all belief in the mission that resides in our hearts, that mission that was once so bright, joyous and peace bringing; we lose all hope of really finding the poor Child wrapped in swaddling clothes. What can my pitiful mission achieve, this drop of water in the white-hot furnace? What is the point of my efforts, my dedication, my sacrifice, my pleading to God for a world that is resolved to perish?

"Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you Good News of a great joy... This day is born the Savior", that is, he who, as Son of God and Son of the Father, has traveled (in obedience to the Father) the path that leads away from the Father and into the darkness of the world. Behind him, omnipotence and freedom; before, powerlessness, bonds and obedience. Behind him the comprehensive divine vision; before him the prospect of the meaninglessness of death on the Cross between two criminals, Behind him the bliss of life with the Father; before him, grievous solidarity with all who do not know the Father, do not want to know him and deny his existence. Rejoice then, for God himself has passed this way! The Son took with him the awareness of doing the Father's will. He took with him the unceasing prayer that the Father's will would be done on the dark earth as in the brightness of heaven. He took with him his rejoicing that the Father had hidden these things from the wise and revealed them to babes, to the simple and the poor. "I am the way", and this way is "the truth" for you; along this way you will find "the life". Along "the way" that I am you will learn to lose your life in order to find it; you will learn to grow beyond yourselves and your insincerity into a truth that is greater than you are. From a worldly point of view everything may seem very dark; your dedication may seem unproductive and a failure. But do not be afraid: you are on God's path. "Let not your hearts be troubled: believe in God; believe also in me." I am walking on ahead of you and

blazing the trail of Christian love for you. It leads to your most inaccessible brother, the person most forsaken by God. But it is the path of divine love itself. You are on the right path. All who deny themselves in order to carry out love's commission are on the right path.

Miracles happen along this path. Apparently insignificant miracles, noticed by hardly anyone. The very finding of a Child wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger is this not a miracle in itself? Then there is the miracle when a particular mission, hidden in a person's heart, really reaches its goal, bringing God's peace and joy where there were nothing but despair and resignation; when someone succeeds in striking a tiny light in the midst of an overpowering darkness. When joy irradiates a heart that no longer dared to believe in it. Now and again we ourselves are assured that the angel's word we are trying to obey will bring us to the place where God's Word and Son is already made man. We are assured that, in spite of all the noise and nonsense, today, December 25, is Christmas just as truly as two millennia ago. Once and for all God has started out on his journey toward us, and nothing, till the world's end, will stop him from coming to us and abiding in us.



IN AND AROUND THE ACCC

Episcopal Visit to ACA/APA Synod and Montreal

ON October 15th, Archbishop Janzen traveled to Belleville, Illinois by invitation of Bishop Brian Marsh, Presiding Bishop of the Anglican Church in America (TAC), to attend the General Synod of the Anglican Church in America and the Anglican Province in America.

The proceedings were held at Our Lady of the Snows, site of one of the largest outdoor shrines in North America. From October 16th to 18th, the bishops, clergy and laity in

attendance enjoyed times of prayer and fellowship in addition to the Synod meetings.

The ACA Synod was held concurrently with that of the Anglican Province of America. Each jurisdiction held separate business meetings, however bishops, clergy and laity from both jurisdictions met for fellowship, worship and prayer.



*Archbishop Janzen with brother Bishops, and the clergy at the ACA/APA Synod in Belleville, IL.
Photograph by Brent Nicholson.*

Archbishop Janzen took advantage of being in the eastern part of the continent to stop in Montreal on the way back to Victoria in his first Episcopal Visit to the Parish of Saint Athanasius. Following Mass on Sunday October 19th, the people of Saint Athanasius treated Archbishop Janzen to great food and conversation. In the afternoon, Fr. Doug Nicholson provided a tour of Old Montreal, including Notre Dame Basilica.



*Archbishop Shane Janzen saying Mass at the Parish of Saint Athanasius, Montreal.
Submitted photograph.*

Thank you to the Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the ACA/APA for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. Thank you as well to Fr. Doug Nicholson and the parishioners of St. Athanasius for their warm welcome, prayerful worship and wonderful luncheon.

Introducing the Reverend Mr. Jeffery BeBeau



*The Reverend Mr. Jeffery BeBeau.
Submitted photograph.*

IN the summer of 2014, Jeffery BeBeau asked to donate a set of four dalmatics and stoles to the parish of Our Lady and St. Michael because he “couldn’t think of a more suitable church for them”. Jeffery was no stranger. He had attended regularly for almost a year in 2009 until the pronouncement that our parish was going to join the Roman Catholic Church. After donating four sets of beautifully crafted liturgical vestments for priest and altar, he dropped out of sight.

At the time, Tom invited Jeffery to bring the dalmatics in person so that he could be thanked by our members. He came, was welcomed, and now he has returned.

Jeffery was born in Saskatchewan and his parents now live in High Prairie, Alberta. He earned both his B.A. and B.Ed. from the University of Alberta. He attended St. Joseph's Seminary, Edmonton, where he studied for the RC priesthood. He was ordained a Deacon by Archbishop Thomas Collins before he decided that the Roman Catholic Church was not for him; which brought him to the ACCC Parish of Our Lady and Saint Michael, Edmonton.



The Rev. Mr. Jeffery BeBeau and members of the Church of Our Lady and Saint Michael, Edmonton. Submitted photograph.

Jeffery gradually became more involved with the parish. He took our ACCC Missal home to familiarize himself with it, and was in contact with Archbishop Janzen first by e-mail, then by telephone. His little chuckle became familiar. We had been praying for help for our Rector, Canon Trevor Elliott. It was obvious that every one of us who met and liked him were praying that Jeffery was our miracle. But the decision had to be his.

On November 15th an e-mail arrived from Archbishop Janzen: "After much prayer and thought, Jeffery BeBeau has petitioned me to be licenced as a Deacon in the ACCC to serve in the Parish of Our Lady and Saint Michael. I am pleased to grant his petition...". On November 16th, the Rev. Mr. Jeffery BeBeau was formally received into the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, swore his oaths and declarations as a clergyman licenced under Archbishop Janzen, and became our Assistant Curate and Deacon.

Deacon Jeffery, wearing his dalmatic and stole, preached his first sermon to us at the

celebration of Christ the King on November 23rd. He spoke with animation and without notes from the front of the church. Elaborating on the impact of Christ the King on the church, on our world and on us as individuals, he spoke of the insistent promptings of the Holy Spirit. We are all so glad that he listened!

Kay Hilton, Secretary

Parish of Our Lady and Saint Michael

News from St. Bede's Anglican Catholic Theological College

THE Board of Regents of Saint Bede's Anglican Catholic Theological College is pleased to announce that work is currently underway on a revised and updated curriculum and distance education delivery program, consistent with a classical Anglican theological education leading to ordination in The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada and the world-wide Traditional Anglican Communion. This undertaking is being led and coordinated by the Rev. Dr. Patrick Fodor (Anglican Church in America), together with Fr. Richard Sutter and Mr. Jim Dukarm.

The revision of the curriculum and on-line courses will provide a rigorous theological program while at the same time taking into account the pastoral needs of the ACCC, along with the educational background, age, family situation, and location of the men seeking ordination. It will also take into account the canonical requirements of other jurisdictions within the Traditional Anglican Communion.

New faculty are being recruited, including the Reverend Dr. Norman Flowers, who has been appointed Dean of the College. Rev. Dr. Flowers is currently Dean at the ITT Technical Institute in Knoxville, Tennessee. He brings with him extensive experience as an education and management administrator, and specializes in curriculum management & development. Dr. Flowers has a Bachelor of Theology; a Master of Divinity; a Master of Theology; and a Ph.D. (Philosophy & Ethics). He is currently licenced as a Deacon in the Diocese of the Missouri Valley (Anglican Church in America - TAC).

ADVENT WREATH AND SERVICE OF LIGHT



DURING the Season of Advent, Christians around the world observe a time of solemn preparation. Advent means 'Coming', and the Services and devotions of this Season reflect the Church's combined emphases on Christ's coming: past, present, and future.

1. Past: The Coming of Emmanuel (which means 'God-with-us') in the Incarnation; so it is preparation for Christmas -- the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Present: The Coming of Christ to us in the Sacrament of the Altar; so it is a reminder of our weekly 'preparation' for living the Christian life.
3. Future: The Final Coming of Christ in Glory; so it is a preparation for the end of time and the Day of Judgement.

On the four Sundays in Advent, many parishes and families use a Service of the Lighting of the Advent Candles. On each Sunday in Advent (at Sunday Mass and in the home that day or evening), one or more of the Candles are lit and prayers are said in preparation for the Coming of Christ into our hearts and homes.

The Advent Wreath is made of evergreen boughs, representing hope and everlasting life. The four candles represent the four Sundays in Advent. Three candles are purple, as a sign of our preparation for Christ's Coming through prayer and penance; and the candle for the Third Sunday is pink, as a sign of rejoicing. The light from the candles signifies Christ, Who is the Light of the World: illuminating our 'journey' through life, enlightening our understanding, and shining in the dark 'winter' of ignorance and sin. The holly placed amidst the evergreen boughs represents the Crown of Thorns; the holly berries, drops of His Precious Blood. The wreath is bound with purple ribbon, for the 'Royal Purple' of the King of kings, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Advent Wreath Service of Light

IN the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

- V. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness;
 R. Let the earth open and bring forth a Saviour. *(Isaiah 45: 8)*

On the First Sunday in Advent is prayed:

BLESS, O Lord, this wreath and these candles which we light in preparation of Thy Coming, and so enkindle our hearts with the fire of Thy Love that we may receive Thee with joy and manifest Thee to all people. May this Advent Wreath be to us a reminder of the Crown of Thorns of Thy Passion, and Thine everlasting Crown of Glory as King of heaven and earth. *Amen.*

On the Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays:

OMOST blessed Light, Who lighteth every one that cometh into the world, bless us as we light these candles in preparation of Thy Coming, and so enkindle our hearts with the fire of Thy Love, that we may receive Thee with joy and gladness, and hold Thee fast with a firm faith. *Amen.*

Then, as the candle(s) are lighted, is said:

- V. Our King and Saviour draweth nigh;
 R. O come, let us worship.

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which Thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when He shall come again in His glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through Him who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

VISIT, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this home and family here gathered; drive far from us all the snares of the enemy; let Thy holy angels dwell herein to keep us in peace, and let Thy blessing be ever upon us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



THE CHRISTMAS NOVENA
(December 16th to 24th)

A Novena is a nine-day period of prayer in preparation for some particular feast in the Christian Calendar or to pray for some particular intention. The first novena was kept, at the express command of the Risen Christ, by the Apostles, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the disciples in the Upper Room from the day of Our Lord's Ascension to the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:12-14). The earliest ecclesiastical novena recorded is one in preparation for Christmas. The Christmas Novena begins on December 16, as noted in the Book of Common Prayer, p. xiii.

The Prayers: (to be said daily)

O LORD Jesus Christ, Who for our sake didst vouchsafe to descend from Thy throne of glory in heaven to this vale of tears; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary and wast made man: Make, we beseech thee, our hearts a fit habitation for Thyself. Beautify and fill them with all spiritual graces, and possess them wholly by Thy power. Give us grace to prepare for Thy Coming with deep humility, to receive Thee with burning love, and to hold Thee with a firm faith; that we may never leave Thee nor forsake Thee; Who livest and reignest, for ever and ever. Amen.

Here say one of the following 'O' Antiphons, according to the day:

Dec. 16: **O WISDOM**, which camest out of the mouth of the Most High, and reachest from one end to another, mightily and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

Dec. 17: **O ADONAI** (Lord) and Leader of the house of Israel, who appearedst in the bush to Moses in a flame of fire, and gavest him the Law in Sinai: Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

Dec. 18: **O ROOT OF JESSE**, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom Kings shall shut their mouths: Come and deliver us and tarry not.

Dec. 19: **O KEY OF DAVID**, and the Sceptre of the house of Israel, that openest and no man shutteth, and shuttest and no man openeth: Come and bring the prisoner out of the prison-house, and him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

Dec. 20: **O DAYSPRING**, Brightness of the Light Everlasting, and Sun of Righteousness: Come and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death.

Dec. 21: **O THOMAS DIDYMUS**, to thee it was vouchsafed to touch Christ risen: Whom we petition, by His mercy from on high, to aid us in our miseries, lest we be doomed with the lost when the Judge appeareth.

Dec. 22: **O KING OF THE NATIONS**, and their Desire, the Cornerstone, who makest both one: Come and save mankind, whom Thou formedst of clay.

Dec. 23: **O EMMANUEL**, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of all nations, and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Dec. 24: **O VIRGIN OF VIRGINS**, how shall this be? For neither before thee was any like thee, nor shall there be after. Daughters of Jerusalem, why marvel ye at me? The thing which ye behold is a divine mystery.

Finally, conclude with the Lord's Prayer and the Advent Collect:

ALMIGHTY GOD, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which Thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the Last Day, when He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through the same Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

ON the **First Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...A Partridge in a Pear Tree: The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, whose birthday we celebrate on December 25, the first day of Christmas. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge that feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, recalling the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered you under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but you would not have it so." (Luke 13:34)

On the **Second Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me... Two Turtle Doves: The Old and New Testaments, which together bear witness to God's self-revelation in history and the creation of a people to tell the Story of God to the world.

On the **Third Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Three French Hens: The Three Theological Virtues: 1) Faith, 2) Hope, and 3) Love (1 Corinthians 13:13)

On the **Fourth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Four Calling Birds: The Four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which proclaim the Good News of God's reconciliation of the world to Himself in Jesus Christ.

On the **Fifth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Five Gold Rings: The first Five Books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the Pentateuch: 1) Genesis, 2) Exodus, 3) Leviticus, 4) Numbers, and 5) Deuteronomy, which gives the history of humanity's sinful failure and God's response of grace in the creation of a people to be a light to the world.

On the **Sixth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Six Geese A-laying: The six days of creation that confesses God as Creator and Sustainer of the world (Genesis 1).

On the **Seventh Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Seven Swans a-swimming: The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: 1) prophecy, 2) ministry, 3) teaching, 4) exhortation, 5) giving, 6) leading, and 7) compassion (Romans 12:6-8; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11)

On the **Eighth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Eight Maids a-milking: The eight Beatitudes: 1) Blessed are the poor in spirit, 2) those who mourn, 3) the meek, 4) those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, 5) the merciful, 6) the pure in heart, 7) the peacemakers, 8) those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. (Matthew 5:3-10)

On the **Ninth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Nine Ladies Dancing: The nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit: 1) love, 2) joy, 3) peace, 4) patience, 5) kindness, 6) generosity, 7) faithfulness, 8) gentleness, and 9) self-control. (Galatians 5:22)

On the **Tenth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Ten Lords a-leaping: The ten commandments: 1) You shall have no other gods before me; 2) Do not make an idol; 3) Do not take God's name in vain; 4) Remember the Sabbath Day; 5) Honor your father and mother; 6) Do not murder; 7) Do not commit adultery; 8) Do not steal; 9) Do not bear false witness; 10) Do not covet. (Exodus 20:1-17)

On the **Eleventh Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Eleven Pipers Piping: The eleven Faithful Apostles: 1) Simon Peter, 2) Andrew, 3) James, 4) John, 5) Philip, 6) Bartholomew, 7) Matthew, 8) Thomas, 9) James bar Alphaeus, 10) Simon the Zealot, 11) Judas bar James. (Luke 6:14-16). [The list does not include the twelfth disciple, Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.]

On the **Twelfth Day of Christmas** my true love gave to me...Twelve Drummers Drumming: The twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed: 1) I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. 2) I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. 3) He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. 4) He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell [the grave]. 5) On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. 6) He will come again to judge the living and the dead. 7) I believe in the Holy Spirit, 8) the holy catholic Church, 9) the communion of saints, 10) the forgiveness of sins, 11) the resurrection of the body, 12) and life everlasting.

