

The Anglican Catholic Chronicle

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

LENT & EASTER 2015

WE have now entered into the Holy Season of Lent. The imposition of ashes at Mass on Ash Wednesday marks for Christians around the world the beginning of a season of penitence, reflection, and conversion. For many people it is not a particularly joyous season. But it can be. To be sure the acknowledgement of personal sin, the call to repentance, and the spiritual discipline that accompany the Lenten Season are not particularly fun loving in and of themselves. But joy is more than a feeling, encompasses more than fun-filled events, and is more than a mental or emotional state of contentment or well-being. I would put it to you that one of the reasons some do not look forward to this Season is that their experience of Lent has been one of mere self-denial, spiritual drudgery and frustration. Denial of what they would want to eat or do, and frustration in not actually accomplishing all that they set out to do in terms of spiritual exercises, devotions, and promises to God of repentance and new Christian zeal. I fear that sometimes we try to do too much in Lent and yet at the same time too little.

This Lent I would ask you to consider doing less, and in so doing, accomplishing more. If we take as our theme the threefold offering of 'time, talent and treasure', we can experience a joyous Lent, all the while deepening our devotion meeting our spiritual goals. We need not promise God or our selves more than a balanced spiritual life should contain. We need not promise to attend Mass each and every day in Lent; nor that we will abstain from all flesh and fowl, desserts, movies, entertainments, hockey

games and dinners out. Nor for that matter must we commit to praying Morning and Evening Prayer, along with Compline, each day and every day. Though all of these are worthy goals and if possible should be incorporated into our everyday routines, we must be realistic according to our station in life. It is better and more productive if each of us keeps the Season of Lent simple, and commits to those things which, while certainly stretching our spiritual muscles, should not cause us to give up after the first week. Examining our lives in terms of time, talent and treasure we can come to some fairly concrete and simple ways in which to enrich our spiritual lives, turn away from habits of sin, and offer God and our neighbours something of our better natures.

TIME. Instead of setting unreasonable goals and expectations around times for prayer, choose only one reasonable goal that you can begin now, and then incorporate into your life beyond the Season of Lent. Look at your daily schedule and determine a period of time each day (say between 15 to 30 minutes) that is going to be your time with God. Now, don't just plunk yourself down in the living room or den and say, 'now this is God's time'; then stare at the wall waiting for whatever to happen. Have a simple plan – as simple as reading a portion of the Bible appropriate for the Season about which you can think and pray. Or, with Prayer Book at hand, pray either the Morning or Evening Prayer contained in the Family Prayers section at the back of the book – having in mind particular persons or needs to place before God. Keep your prayer time simple, realistic and consistent.

Most, if not all of you, lead busy lives – even in retirement. Many have family responsibilities, work schedules, volunteer duties, doctors' appointments, and other such commitments. Somewhere in all of that you need to make time for God. Let your time with God in prayer become the bookends of your day; let prayer be the anchor that steadies your daily schedule and busy life. And in that time with God in prayer, let God get a word in – listen as well as speak. Prayer is nothing more than our conversation with God. Speak to God honestly, plainly and in your own way. God is our Father in heaven, He knows you and wants you to know Him better. Then, when you have finished speaking to God, listen to what He has to offer you for your spiritual growth and eternal salvation. You may be surprised at how much forgiveness, guidance, and blessing can come from a few minutes each day with God.

TALENT. I know that many of you already volunteer your time and talent to others. Some as part of a regular weekly pattern, for others as the opportunity arises. The offering of our talents and skills for the ongoing work of the Church, for the betterment of society, or for the individual needs of those around us, is an important part of our commitment as Christians. Service to others should also form part of our Lenten discipline. Visiting the sick in hospital or the shut-in at home; driving a person to the doctor or picking up groceries; volunteering your time and talent as part of the ministry of our Parish – all of these are examples of ways to grow spiritually while furthering the kingdom of God.

TREASURE. Christ said that where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. Lent is a good time to reexamine the place of money in our Christian lives. Are we the master of our money or is money our master? Do we offer God and His Church a sacrificial tithe of what we have or is our weekly offering whatever is left after

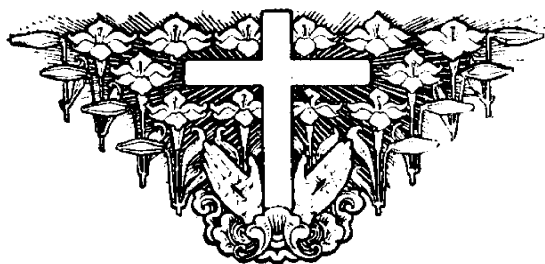
everything else gets paid? Do we heed the words of Holy Scripture that state: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase"? (*Prov. 3:9*) Do we honour and respect the godly admonition of the Prayer Book by offering our money according to our means for the support of the work of the Church at home and overseas? The ministry and mission of Christ's holy Church are sustained only by your generosity and faithful offerings. I know how generous you all are in your weekly offerings and there is certainly evidence of your faithful stewardship. But as each new year comes upon us, many of you review your family budgets and spending habits; so too, with the Season of Lent, let each of us review our offering to God, that it be a true reflection of our love and devotion to Christ and His Church.

As you heard from the altar steps on Ash Wednesday, "in the name of the Church, I invite you to the observance of a holy Lent" – a time for repentance of sin, for spiritual reflection and renewal, and for an offering in sincerity and love of your time, talent, and treasure to Christ and His Church.

May God richly bless each of you as you undertake your Lenten discipline and devotions; knowing that what you offer God is but as nothing compared to all that He gives to you.

+Shane B. Janzen





HOLY SEASON OF EASTER

MORE than the Season of Christmas, Eastertide is the season of Christian joy and celebration. Christmas, with all its wonder and beauty, only announces the birth of the Christ-Child, who would one day redeem the world from sin and evil. Easter on the other hand brings to us the announcement of new life, eternal life, and the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ, who has defeated death and risen in glory.

Born in a stable and placed as a Babe in a borrowed wooden manger, Jesus the man was nailed to a wooded cross, and laid to rest in a borrowed grave hewn from the rock. But death could not hold Him, just as the world, the flesh, and the devil, could not defeat Him. He is risen; and dwells now at the right hand of God the Father, holding us close to His heart, where Love is to be found.

Ours is an Easter Faith. Following the forty days of Lent and then Holy Week, we enter into fifty days of Easter, during which we celebrate Christ crucified and risen as people of faith; an Easter people charged with the spirit of the Risen Christ; eager to spread the good news, and to share with all we meet the joy which is ours as Christians.

And in the conditions of our present world, with war and violence, terrorism, and so many innocent lives taken without thought, it is all the more important that we live as people of faith, hope, and love. People who believe in Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord and Saviour of the world – He who is Risen, Ascended and Glorified.

Regardless of what may happen in our world or in our lives, we know Christ lives. He has told us not to be anxious or afraid – He is ever with us, even in our darkest hours; has overcome the world. In His abiding presence we are safe from the powers of evil and terror at work around us. We need not fear the power of the enemy nor the power of death. We need not fear the grave nor gates of hell; Jesus has overcome all and shown us the way to God.

We, who profess belief in the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, profess not only an historical fact, a religious dogma, but a way of life. For those who believe walk with the risen Christ each day; they know the power of His presence in their lives: transforming, healing, forgiving, loving, empowering. As we read in the Easter Gospel, it was only when Mary Magdalene turned her back away from the grave that she beheld her risen Lord. When we turn our backs on sin and death, and away from a life lived only for self, then we too are transformed and experience the power and the joy of the Risen Christ in our lives. Life was not the same for the Apostles and disciples who, on Easter morning, stood before the empty tomb and then beheld Jesus, risen from the dead; and it will never be the same for us who profess with our hearts and lives the reality of the Resurrection as people of faith and hope.

As we rejoice in the blessings of Easter, we know our journey of faith is not yet complete. We have many more trials and joys to encounter and overcome; but we do so in the knowledge that we are not alone; we are part of the family of God, brothers and sisters in Christ, much loved by the Father and precious in His sight. Let us therefore live on in His love as ‘the children of God, members of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven’. Let us celebrate with true Christian joy this most holy Season of Easter!



***Carter v. Canada*
Supreme Court of Canada
Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia**

IN *Carter v. Canada (Attorney General)* the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada's laws that prohibit assisting someone to commit suicide. The Supreme Court ruled on February 6, 2015 that the prohibition against physician-assisted suicide is unconstitutional in certain circumstances, and has given Parliament twelve months to regulate when and how assisted suicide can be legally practised.

As the definition of "physician-assisted death" includes the provision or administration of medication that intentionally brings about a person's death, both assisted suicide (provision of lethal drugs) and euthanasia (administration of lethal drugs) will be legal for people who meet certain criteria.

The person must be "a competent adult person who (1) clearly consents to the termination of life and (2) has a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disease or disability) that causes enduring suffering that is intolerable to the individual in the circumstances of his or her condition," according to the Court.

As Christians, we believe that life is a gift from God which should be respected and protected through all its stages. Each human life has inherent worth, regardless of age or physical, mental or other disabilities. Care for the sick and the elderly is part of God's call for Christians. We must not abandon those in need, and we must not deliberately bring about their death, even for compassionate reasons.

We affirm the sanctity of human life. The Supreme Court also affirms the sanctity of human life, calling it "one of our most important fundamental societal values." On this basis the Supreme Court had previously

upheld the ban on assisted suicide and euthanasia.

However in this controversial decision sadly the Court has overturned its previous decision and has now ruled that in some circumstances the autonomy of the individual supersedes the interest of society in having a legal system that unambiguously affirms the sanctity of human life. A threshold has been crossed and in some cases assisted suicide and euthanasia will be condoned. Canadian law formerly adhered to the biblical principle, "Thou shalt not murder." This has changed.

The decision refers to physicians assisting in someone's death by providing medication, which suggests that both the medical profession and the health-care system will be involved. As such, it is not a private act between two people, but a public act regulated by a process designed and monitored by the government, and possibly publicly funded. It concerns us all.

The Court noted the concerns of medical professionals, who requested that any legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia must include a robust protection of their freedom of conscience and religion. While affirming physicians' Charter rights of conscience and religion and stating its view that "nothing in [this decision] would compel physicians to provide assistance in dying," the Court left the specifics to legislatures, regulators and future court cases, noting that patients' rights (to access assisted death) must also be considered.

This raises the question whether physicians who refuse to euthanize their patients may be compelled to refer their patients to a doctor willing to do so, as proposed by draft regulations in Ontario and Saskatchewan. Many Christians consider a referral for abortion or voluntary euthanasia to be impermissible participation in the act of killing itself.

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The Court has given Parliament twelve months to draft new legislation in keeping with the decision, which acknowledges that the “risks inherent in physician-assisted suicide” call for “a carefully-designed system imposing stringent limits that are scrupulously monitored and enforced.” Parliament will now need to define the terms “grievous” and “irremediable,” and put in place safeguards to ensure the process is not abused, that the vulnerable are protected, and that the newfound “right” is only exercised by those who truly consent, free of cognitive impairment, judgment-clouding depression or coercion and manipulation, and after being fully informed of their diagnosis, prognosis and available treatment options including palliative care and dignity therapy.

Medical technology’s ability to prolong life complicates questions regarding when and how life should end. Many people do not want machines to keep them alive, particularly if they are in pain; real problems arise, supporting life. At the same time, we must distinguish between a patient refusing medical treatment when death is inevitable and choosing death when it is not.

When someone struggling with a terminal or debilitating illness asks to die, the questions which face us as family members and friends, as neighbours and society, include: “What is the merciful response?” “What does compassion require of us?” Such suffering is real; the desire to end the pain and suffering of terminally ill patients may be understandable. There is indeed a growing tendency to promote “mercy killing” as a solution to pain and suffering resulting from age, illness, or mental or physical disabilities.

Since all human lives are precious, euthanasia or assisted suicide is never a right or acceptable solution. God has created medical practices that treat extremely effectively pain and other distressing symptoms of terminal illness.

Palliative care and emotional support are necessary and appropriate responses to those who suffer from terminal illnesses and/or are near death.

The Supreme Court of Canada in its ruling in the Carter case went beyond the issues of terminal illness and those near death. The Court ruled that the “enduring and intolerable suffering” that would confer the right to assisted suicide is not limited to physical pain, but includes psychological pain. Furthermore, the Court did not define “suffering” but ruled that the threshold of when “enduring and intolerable suffering” warrants death is solely up to the determination of the individual. The Court declared that it is enough that the condition of the individual be incurable, it need not be terminal in order for the individual to exercise his or her right to an assisted death. Which begs the question, what is there to prevent a person suffering from chronic depression who sees their condition as “enduring and intolerable” to demand their right to die (by means of assisted suicide)? There is nothing in the Supreme Court ruling which would prevent or ensure that the ‘right to die’ will not be expanded or abused. In Belgium, assisted suicide is now provided to children on demand – what makes a future Canada any different?

Furthermore, as Christians and Canadians, we should be concerned about the expansion of this so-called ‘right to die’. For some day, someone is going to bring a case before the courts arguing that a child with an incurable disease who is in ‘enduring and intolerable’ pain should have the right to assisted suicide. In light of the Carter case, can we really say that the courts are going to rule that such children must endure years of pain and suffering until they are of legal age to consent to their death? What about the mentally incompetent who suffer unbearably? What about those suffering from dementia or the permanently disabled who are mentally incompetent? We may

well ask ourselves whether under this new regime, where the 'right to life' does not mean a 'duty to live', it is enough simply for a person to want to die in order for them to exercise their right to an assisted death?

So what can we do? As Christians we have a message of hope and compassion. In all we do we must act in ways that bring Christ's compassion into the lives of suffering people. We must communicate our compassion to those who suffer and find their lives to be meaningless so they would rather die than live. Furthermore, we must be prepared to offer more than words in response to those who say that they have no hope in life and wish to die. We cannot proclaim the truth of God's law without bringing Christ's compassion and live in a real way. If we truly reflect Christ in our lives we will take action to show that God suffers with the suffering and offers hope to those who despair. We must equip ourselves to minister to the disabled, the elderly and those who are terminally ill in informal ways and more structured ways, especially when opportunities arise to participate in hospice care or palliative care. As Christians, as family members, we need to reassure older members of our families, and those who are disabled mentally or physically, of their value and the meaning of their lives. It is important to involve them in the regular routine of family life. Try as much as possible to alleviate any loneliness they may feel. It is important that we don't make any member of our family (or indeed among our friends and fellow parishioners) feel burdensome or forgotten.

Pray for those who feel life is not worth living and for those who are suffering. We need to remind them and ourselves of God's love for each person, of the value God places on each person, and of God's compassion for the suffering. We should also find ways to express love to seniors and the disabled. In our Cathedral Parish in Victoria, Father Jack Archbold, together with other members

of the congregation, hold services on Saturday at the All Care Home in Sidney, spending time in prayer, worship and fellowship with the residents. In all of this it is important that we understand and provide good teaching about death and dying, illness and disability, within a Christian faith context and worldview; maintaining and defending the sanctity of life and the dignity of every person.

With a federal election due this year, it is important that Christians across our country urge Parliament to move quickly to design and implement stringent safeguards to ensure the practice of physician-assisted death is rare, and to ensure that good quality palliative care is available to all who require it. As Christians and as Canadians, we need to ensure that those suffering are comforted and cared for, and that no one will come to the place where they would be so desperate as to choose to die.

I would urge you to write to your Member of Parliament, as well as to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice. Raise with them your concerns about the impact of this ruling on our society, especially upon the vulnerable – the aged, the disabled, the mentally challenged. Let them know the importance of legislating proper safeguards to ensure that the practice of assisted suicide is regulated, and that good quality palliative care is available to those suffering from chronic or terminal illness. Press Parliamentarians to use the 'notwithstanding clause' in the Constitution, which allows the will of the Canadian Parliament and electorate to prevail over the rulings of an appointed nine member court.

+Shane B. Janzen

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Diocese of Canada West Clergy Retreat 2015

by Father Glenn Galenkamp

ON Monday, February 9th the Clergy from the Diocese of Canada West began to gather in Calgary, Alberta at the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) Centre for our annual Clericus. The retreat was officially started with Morning Prayer on Tuesday. The talks for this year's Clericus were given by His Grace Archbishop Shane Janzen, Metropolitan of All Canada and Ordinary of the Diocese of Canada West. The talks focused on the life of Jesus Christ and His ministry among us. The sacrificial nature of His work was related to the priesthood which we as clergy share with Him.



After each talk there was time for meditation and reflection upon Christ's life and work. In addition to Morning and Evening Prayer, we also prayed the Lesser Offices of the day.



During the day we observed silence, however as we only come together once a year, at dinner time and afterwards we had the opportunity to catch up with one another.



After dinner on Tuesday we met together with the Archbishop to be updated on events in the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, as well as the wider Tradition Anglican Communion. We also had the opportunity to speak with each other about the triumphs and struggles that we were all facing within our parishes and communities. Many different ideas were discussed for ways in which we can reach out to our local communities in this post-Christian world in which we find ourselves. The Archbishop also gave us his time to meet with each priest privately during the retreat. Time for confession was also made available for us as well. We also had the opportunity to meet Mr. James Shaw who is discerning a call to the ordained ministry.



The Clericus was a wonderful time of spiritual reflection as well as fellowship with our brethren. Of course, Holy Communion was central to our time together and we took turns reading the Epistle and proclaiming the Gospel, with the Archbishop as Celebrant, and James Shaw as Server.

Church Outreach & Growth

SURVEYS of Canadians over the last several years have repeatedly indicated that in matters of religion, men and women of all ages and income brackets continue to look for answers with respect to three fundamental issues: God, self, and society. Close to 90 percent of Canadians still identify themselves as men and women of faith. Yet on a national average, only 25 percent attend Church weekly -- a number which is expected to drop in half over the next 20 years. The rites of passage continue to be important to the vast majority of Canadian adults -- baptism, marriage, funerals -- and church continues to play an important role in these rites of passage but increasingly on a marginalized, consumer basis.

While the so-called 'younger generation' in our society does not in large numbers frequent weekly services, they do reflect upon matters of faith. We know from surveys that Canadians, young and old, are increasingly fascinated with supernatural ideas, yet often don't associate that interest with church. Men and women are seeking for God but are not sure where He is to be found or how to know Him. With respect to self, many Canadians are searching for personal meaning, hope, and fulfillment, but again frequently don't associate those kinds of quest with what the Church offers. And Canadians of all ages and backgrounds value nothing more highly than relationships. However, once again these same men and women do not associate enhanced social life -- from personal relationships to global concerns -- with what the Church has to offer and say. Why?

Part of the answer lies in our culture. The sharp decline in church attendance since the 1940s is directly tied to the inclination among Canadians to adopt a belief here and a practice there; to want religion to speak to some areas of their lives but not others; to resurface for the rites of passage -- baptisms, weddings and funerals -- all the while not really coming to church and yet not really leaving either. What has been called 'cafeteria Christianity' -- where one goes along the religious smorgasbord picking and choosing what one wants depending upon one's current needs or wants, leaving the rest behind, has become an all too familiar trend. Yet this trend is not restricted to matters of religion; it is

happening in every sphere of Canadian life. Selective consumption, pluralism, individualism, and relativism are being felt everywhere -- just ask retailers, educators, the media, or politicians. But this is only part of the answer, or problem if you will. The other part lies in ourselves as Church.

Both empirical and anecdotal evidence shows clearly that the image of the isolated individual who finds God or a church on his or her own is a figment of the imagination. The dominant sources of religious commitment and involvement remain *relational* -- individuals are introduced to God and Church by others. God Himself deigned to come down from His throne in heaven to become man and to walk among us, introducing Himself, telling others about Himself, and involving Himself personally in the lives of His people. We, as Christ's disciples in this moment in time, need to model this divine initiative, and to build credible relationships with people outside the church; inviting them to join us in worship and fellowship; and to talk with them about *their* faith, *their* concerns, and *their* needs and questions -- and through these relationships introduce them to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, in the community of believers, the Church.

It is a simple fact that churches 'grow their own' through members sharing faith with their children and grandchildren, with their neighbours and co-workers, and with the person who walks in on a Sunday morning and sits nervously in the back pew. Individually and collectively we need to be a place in which the authentic Christian faith is transmitted and Christ-centred relationships are fostered.

Research tells us that most Canadians are not looking for churches -- or even religion, at least in terms of 'organized religion'. But people do express spiritual and supernatural interests, have personal desires and needs, and want to experience enhanced interpersonal lives. And therein lies our greatest challenge and our greatest opportunity.

The formula for successful Christian outreach and parish growth is simple but demanding: Know your Faith; pray with faith; be confident in that faith, and then reach out with faith.

