



The Shepherd's Staff

***Newsletter of the
Diocese of the Western States***

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Saint Joseph of Arimathea Seminary

Summer Session

The 2021 Saint Joseph of Arimathea Seminary Summer Session will be held during the last two weeks of July (19th to 30th) on the Zoom platform. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and other concerns we are not able to offer student or auditor “in-person” classes until next summer. But the internet and the Zoom Platform does allow for us to offer “at-distance” learning. Of course, expenses will be much less for “at-distance” learning, but students who wish to take classes for credit must set aside their 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. time slots to fully participate. Auditors are warmly welcome and can pick and choose their classes.

Morning Prayer will be read at 9:30 a.m. and lead by various students and clergy. At 10:00 a.m., during the first week Bishop Ashman will guide a Directed Reading Class concentrating on difficult passages from Scripture and the Church Fathers; the second week Bishop Upham will teach Early Ecclesiology. After a short break, at 11:15, Bishop Ashman will teach a Deacon’s Practicum for all current deacons and postulants who are considering ordination in the next two years, even if they have already passed their canonical exams and been cleared by their Standing Committees and (for the priesthood) successfully passed their interview by the Council of Bishops. We will break for Lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. after which Father Dr. Paul Russell will conduct an interactive seminar until 2:15 p.m. Tentatively, the first week will focus on the Holy Trinity and the second week will focus on the Book of Daniel. Each day will close at 3:15 with Evening Prayer read by various students and faculty.

The cost for students is \$100.00 and auditors \$50.00. Students and auditors will need a computer, internet access and time to complete assignments. The provost would like to remind the clergy that this summer session is a great opportunity to academically grow and interact with your brother clergy. Send you fee to the Registrar, Canon Ben Jones at Saint George’s Anglican Pro-Cathedral, 1210 Dixie Trail, Raleigh, NC 27607 and he will send you an application form via email the student can fill out and return.

FALL SESSION

Starting in September 2021, five classes will be offered all via the Zoom Platform – and all available for credit or audit, for laity, postulants, and clergy.

1. Bishop Blair Schultz will teach an expanded year-long class in *An Analysis of the Book of Common Prayer*. This is an excellent refresher course for all clergy, even for senior clergy.
2. Archbishop Upham will teach *Ecclesiology* in the Fall and *Ecclesiastical Polity* in the Spring (2022).
3. And Bishop Ashman will teach Biblical Greek Five-Six, First-Year Ecclesiastical Latin class and College Level World History and Religions.

Confirmations at Saint Francis of Assisi in Livermore

On May twenty third, Whitsunday (Pentecost Sunday), Bishop Ashman visited Saint Francis Anglican Church in Livermore and confirmed (l-r) Kyra Wang, Tyler Wang, Rex Moal, and Charlotte Shaddix with Father Ben Brown (rector) and Father Larry Shaddix (rector elect)



Something to Think About

I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (John 16: 32,33)

At the suggestion of Bishop Blair Schultz, I have been reading ***The Lost History of Christianity***, by Philip Jenkins, in which he chronicles how the Christian Church in the Middle East and Central Asia has largely disappeared. Please understand, this is a reflection, not a book review, and the reason I am sharing my thoughts is because of the cold fear that is strangling so many faithful and orthodox Christians; and that fear is one of irrelevance or, even worse, extinction. Indeed, from the first days of our movement after the Congress of Saint Louis in 1976 and the Denver Consecrations of 1978, the Episco-Pagans have done everything in their power to marginalize or exterminate us. The last eighteen months and Covid-19 have given our “hoped for demise” much ammunition and many of our own flock have despaired. And yet, I argue that such is not true.

At one time, 1,400 to 1,000 years ago, Christians were most numerous and very influential in lands that are “no longer Christian” today. These Christians were not all Orthodox as we teach in our theology classes. They were Nestorians or Monophysites, Copts or Syriacs, living in Egypt, Palestine, Iran, Persia, India and spreading all the way to Central Asia, China and Japan. But, we must remember, they were deeply sincere in their Faith and had more in common with us (Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican) than we might suppose. They all believed that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, died on the cross to save us from our sins, rose from the dead to give us eternal life, and through the Holy Ghost founded the Church on Pentecost to lead all men and women towards salvation. But most of them, except for some remnants are gone. Were their lives and pilgrimages in vain. No! I think not! Their witness was not in vain!

I submit that cold fear is irrational and causes a range of symptoms (pardon me if I gore your ox) from compromising our standards (why can't we all be one?) to despair (we are a dying Church) to quarreling among ourselves (I don't like my Bishop – or Priest – or so-in-so). The Christians in the Middle East have mostly died out but Jenkins points out that their influence has not died out completely. Many religious prayers of Muslim mystics (Sufis) take their roots and inspiration from Christian Mysticism. Even into the last century, self-described devout Muslims in rural areas of Turkey (once an “impregnable” stronghold of Christianity) still, just to be safe, have their infants baptized. We must remember that many Christians converted to Islam because Islam was, in their opinion, more rigidly monotheistic (seeing Jesus as more divine than human) than the Christianity which we practice (Jesus is fully divine and fully human).

Consider the Oxford Movement of the mid to late nineteenth century which saved and restored the Catholic Religion in the Church of England. In spite of determined efforts to marginalize and destroy their movement, they picked up the heritage from the Non-Juror Movement which had died out and gave us Anglicanism as we know it and are fighting to continue today. Many of them “gave up” or “swam the Tiber” but the movement continued as the Non-Jurors died out but continued - and we shall continue even if we should die out. So why are we so worried about marginalization or extinction. Like the once influential and numerous Churches that stretched from Turkey, Iran and Egypt to Central Asia and China we will continue to bear witness to the Faith once delivered to the Saints.

And consider as well the countless souls the Lost Churches of the Middle East to Asia (even if they were heretical by our standards – just like Protestants?!?) saved and sent to their eternal reward in heaven. *Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth* (Luke 15. 10). So, permit me to ask us what is more important: importance or marginalization, continuing or extinction - or sending souls to Jesus? So let us resolve to put away our fear and to laugh at the Devil who exults in our fear. It doesn't matter how much we possess or how large or successful our parishes may be, or even whether our movement lives or dies – the Church will always live, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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Farewell at Saint Joseph's Seminary Chapel

Dean Napier and the good folks at Saint Joseph's Seminary Chapel said a heartfelt goodbye to Father Larry Shaddix who has been elected Rector of Saint Francis of Assisi Anglican Church in Livermore CA. Father Shaddix will be instituted as Rector of Saint Francis on Sunday July 25th, the Feast of Saint James.



Anglican Churchwomen Notes

June already, and the year is flying by. Maybe because we have more freedom now, and at last can see our loved ones and friends without masks, get together for meals and see everyone's smile. Above all, hugs! We still have a long way to go, but the future looks brighter, and we will continue to fight for our freedom.

Churches are opening, and congregations getting back together. ACW groups will be able to get together and plan future fundraisers. On that note, Carol Karcher deserves much kudos for her 'Preserve'ing the Priesthood' project, which to date has brought in \$910 for seminarian scholarships at St. Joseph of Arimathea Seminary! We will certainly continue this project at the next synod, so all you gardeners, jam, jelly, and pickle makers remember to set aside some for the Country Store.

A gentle reminder to all churches that have not yet sent in checks for the proceeds of Lenten Mite Boxes that they are due now. Remember that this also helps seminarians, and the next recipient might be from your church! Send checks to Gillian Golden, Provincial ACW Lenten Chairman, P.O. Box 558, Selma, OR 97538-0558. Thank you to all churches that have already sent donations. You will be receiving your certificates soon.

Gillian Golden. President ACW-DWS

Nihil Sub Sole Novum

How many of us remember the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Christ the King (1984) when Bishop Morse said, The present Cardinal Archbishop of Paris has recently said, "The West is born of Christianity, and the crisis of the West is that it isn't Christian anymore." T.S. Eliot, the outstanding metaphysical poet of this century and a great Anglican churchman, writes: *The World is trying the experiment of attempting to form a civilized but non-Christian mentality. The experiment will fail; but we must be very patient awaiting its collapse; meanwhile redeeming the time: so that the Faith may be preserved alive through the dark ages before us; to renew and rebuild civilization, and save the world from suicide.* There is nothing new under the sun – even thirty seven years later!

A Sermon for the Feast of Saint Philip and Saint James

May 1

I have never had a “conversion experience” like so many of my friends and associates, but I have always known or trusted that God, so to speak, has always “had my back” and (as simplistic and childlike as it may sound) that I am surrounded by his grace, even when I am ignorant of it. Theologically, what links Saint Philip and Saint James is found in the Epistle taken from the Epistle of James and Jesus’ dialogue with Saint Philip in Saint John’s Gospel. We know very little about these two apostles, Saint James the Less (son of Alphaeus and considered to be the author of the Book of James) and Saint Philip, but we do know that they steadfastly followed their blessed Saviour in their ministries. What we learn in James’ Epistle are the virtues of patience and endurance, how, as we walk in the pilgrimage of this life and work through its many temptations (even its sins and failures), by grace we work our way through those temptations and failures, so that we gain strength and endurance. Indeed, many of us lack an emotional “conversion experience,” but through the trying of our Faith, we nevertheless find the Vision of God.

As we are slowly and painfully coming out of the Covid-19 pestilence and as I age and see my friends, one by one, getting closer to or “going to God,” I find comfort in James’ Epistle, for he tells us that if we waver in our faith, like the waves of the sea, we will lose our Faith - and our way. James tells us not to place our confidence in material goods and the riches of this world and that in our poverty we should rejoice in our humility, because just as the rich and proud, and just like the bright and beautiful flowers of the grass under the hot sun, we too shall wither and perish. But James gives us hope as he concludes, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptations for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” Such endurance (even though we are sinners) is truly to know God on both sides of the grave.

And correspondingly, considering our mortality, John’s passage reminds us of that same crown of life which he calls the Mansions in his Father’s House. The grace of the Holy Ghost which surrounds us, is perfected in us by in following Jesus, our Blessed Saviour. After Jesus tells Thomas that he is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man is able to come to the Father, except through him, Philip asks Jesus to show the Father to the Apostles. After gently chiding Philip for his lack of understanding, Jesus reveals to Philip that everyone who sees him and his works, his miracles - and believes, has seen the Father. “Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.” Like James’ stressing that we show our faith by our works (both being mutually inseparable), Jesus tells us through Philip that when we see his works in our lives and the world around us and believe in him (that he is one with the Father), we shall indeed do greater works.

So how do we accomplish these greater works so that we shall obtain the crown of eternal life? There are two ways. First is to believe and second is to act. Am I talking about Faith and works? You bet I am! I was sent to parochial school for twelve years! The Faith and believing part was easy – for me. I was naïve and believed that there is a God and that the Church was sent to help us in our earthly pilgrimages. When I became an Episcopalian, I was introduced to the Summary of the Law and learned that we prove our love for God by the way we live our lives. And (I speak for myself – and I think most of my readers would agree) that this latter commandment is much harder to keep. I can never understand my fellow Christians who divorce Faith and good works.

Our lives, my friends, must be dedicated to Faith and good works – no apologies and no offence meant to my Reformational brethren! The Collect and Lessons are not biographical but theological in nature – to help us to perfectly (completely) know our Blessed Saviour; and in that way, come to see God so that it will be easier and easier to love, forgive and show mercy to our brothers and sisters.

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