

THE MAGDALENE



From the Desk of Fr. Neil...

PROVINCIAL SYNOD 2020 **RECAP**

I and a few other parishioners are just back from the ACC's XXIII Provincial Synod held in Atlanta Georgia. I had noted a few things in the announcements on the Sunday following but I wanted to expand my report to you here.

As many know already, after 40 years or so after the Episcopal Church apostatized and made history by breaking with Scripture, Tradition and History, the fractured Anglican Communion is on a path of rebuilding and coming together once again, by returning to Biblical teaching and tradition. The four communions involved in this are our own Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), The Anglican Church in America (ACA), the Anglican Province in America (APA) and the Diocese of the Holy Cross (DHC). This group of four has taken on the nickname the G-4. Progress has been purposely slow so as to assure the smoothest transition toward full unity again.

Other Bishops representing other Anglican Communions were also present. Headed by the Most Reverend Anthony Mikovsky, the Polish National Catholic Church was present. Bp. Mikovsky spoke to the Synod with words of hope to be part of the conversation and perhaps make it five communions coming together. Archbishop Haverland (ACC) said, "We recognize the existence of liturgical, historical, cultural, and even some theological differences between our traditions. Our goal is not to merge churches or to achieve full organic union, but, again, to return to the *status quo ante*." Also present was

the Bishop of the Charismatic Episcopal Church, represented by David Epps, Bishop of the Mid-South Diocese. No formal commitment or discussion with the CEC has been established at this time. These bishops outside of the G-4 were strictly present as observers and to be a presence of friendly support to the process of reunification. Archbishop Haverland (ACC) also noted his ongoing dialogue with the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC). He spoke highly of Bishop Sutton, its current Primate and hopes to see the REC move out of the ACNA and into communion with orthodox Anglicans, as they too are orthodox in the faith. Haverland also reiterated what we all know it to be only a matter of time of the inevitable split that will have to take place within the ACNA because of its internal contradictions of attempting to hold a communion together with disagreeing parties over women's ordination.

The goal at the moment for the G-4 is to work toward full communion. At the moment we are in a state of *Communio in Sacris*. Surprisingly, Wikipedia has an accurate definition: *Communio in Sacris* or "Full communion is a communion or relationship of full understanding among different Christian denominations that share certain essential principles of Christian theology. Views vary among denominations on exactly what constitutes full communion, but typically when two or more denominations are in full communion it enables services and celebrations, such as the Eucharist, to be shared among congregants or clergy of any of them with the full approval of each." This seems to be the most logical goal in my opinion. It allows for Christian charity and interaction with one another and yet does not seek to overtake or violate certain separate differences one or more may have with another.

Also present were Bishops from Africa, Pakistan, Colombia and New Zealand. Each gave reports on their status and progress. All reports were positive, despite each district's problems with hunger, government intervention and other setbacks. Bishop Mushtaq Andrew from Pakistan brought some vestments and other items to sell that the women of the Technical Vocational Training Center had made. Bishop Orrego brought with him, coffee beans from local growers and other items made by his people, also to sell. I shipped two large boxes of old acolyte and choir vestments and those were laid out on tables for the taking. Needless to say all of those items went very quickly. Countries like Africa and South America will put those to good use in their parishes.

Bishop Alphonse from Cameroon, another bishop we have sent diocesan funds to was there. He too is doing well, improving his water tank tower and pump system along with his medical center. He sends along his "thank you's" to us for our prayers and assistance.

Bishop Lerow of the Diocese of the MidAtlantic States was very appreciative of our assistance with his chaplaincy program. With his newly printed book that I edited, had printed and shipped to the Synod, he was able to attract a few men from other communions to inquire and even sign up for more information on becoming a chaplain. Our hope is that as some of these men become chaplains and are stationed nearby they will be able to visit and assist not only in our church but in other churches around the country.

Our very good friend John Omwake, long-time editor of the Trinitarian newspaper announced his retirement at the end of 2020. He hopes a one year time span will be sufficient for the ACC and the other communions who enjoy the benefit of his paper to find a replacement. John was given a well earned standing ovation for his service.

I was fortunate to be invited to a private dinner held for the Bishops with Dioceses in Africa which attended the Syod. This was an important time to hear in detail the state of things in the different parts of Africa. I was impressed at the progress some of them reported. They have been learning by trial and error how to improve their food supply, and income stream. They have been very successful in raising chickens for eggs, to sell and to raise more chickens. It was very important for them to share with one another their ideas and how they had figured out how to improve their standard of living. The entrepreneurial spirit is not strong in certain places around the world, so I was proud of these men for their perseverance in working through the problems they have encountered. Through trial and error, they have made great improvements in their projects.

Outside of these things, I was able to touch base with a number of clergy friends that I have made over the years. Next Synod I hope to engage the clergy more by spending time formally with them in discussions on how we might channel our ideas and energy in Evangelism growing the Anglican Communion here in the United States as well.

The next Synod is tentatively scheduled to be held in the same location two years from now.

**St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church
205 So. Glassell Street
Old Town Orange, CA 92866
www.stmarymagdaleneacc.org**

Rev. Fr. Neil Edlin, Rector

**Sunday Services:
8am Mass
10am Choral Mass &
Children's Sunday School**

**Wednesday Service &
Anointing of the Sick: 9am**

Acquiring Truth

“WHAT IS HENOtheISM?”

“In 1 Samuel chapters 4-6, why do the Philistines seem to acknowledge the God of Israel while still worshiping their god Dagon?”

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; besides Me *there is* no God.’” - Isaiah 44:6

The Scriptures teach from the beginning that there is only one God, as Deuteronomy 4:39 states, “the LORD Himself *is* God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is* no other.” A useful religious concept that helps us understand many people outside of Israel in the Old Testament is “henotheism.” Henotheism is a type of polytheism which acknowledges the existence of many gods, but only or primarily worships or serves one god, which is often thought to be connected to a certain people or location.

1 Samuel 4-6 is a good example of henotheism. In these chapters the Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant and begin to be afflicted by the LORD. The Philistines recognize Jehovah’s power saying that the God of Israel’s “hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god” (1 Sam 5:7). Furthermore, they send the Ark back with a “trespass offering” and the Philistine priests of Dagon say that they should “give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods” (1 Sam 6:5). We see in this text that the Philistines acknowledged the LORD’s existence and power (and even his superiority), yet they still professed Dagon as their god.

Another example of henotheism can be seen in 1 Kings 20 where the Syrians erroneously think that the LORD is only the god of mountainous

areas. The Syrians are defeated in battle by the Israelites and explain the loss of the battle this way, “Their gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we” (1 Kings 20: 23). The Apostle Paul links false gods and idols to demons. He writes in 1 Corinthians 10, “the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God.” Likewise, John in Revelation 9 says, “But the rest of mankind... did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold.”

Knowing about henotheism can help us understand some puzzling passages in Scripture. While many nations acknowledged many gods, the true and living God revealed in his word that there is only one God and that he is maker of and authoritative over heaven and earth.

CURRENT EVENTS

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MEMBER?

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body....and all were made to drink of one Spirit. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.” [1 Cor 12:4-13 & 24-26] This is why we are baptized and when ready, commit to become a committed member of the church both big “C” and little “c”. We are not meant to act as individuals going through the motions each Sunday. We have been created to join together in worship, in sharing, in harmony and in peace until such time as God calls us to him.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation/Refresher classes **begin on February 2nd at 9:00am** in the small conference room. The classes are limited in enrollment and must be attended regularly **through June**. If you are interested in making this commitment, please come to the first class. There will be no add-ons after February 9th.

ALL CHURCH 2020 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting, held on **Sunday, February 23rd at 11:15am**, is the official reporting of the Operational and Financial affairs of the church for the year to the members. Fr. Neil will be presenting a new format for the meeting. You will hear reports from the Officers and ministry leaders about accomplishments over the year. Most importantly, you will **hear Fr. Neil's Vision for SMM in 2020. This meeting requires a quorum**, so all members of the church are encouraged to attend.

A no-host catered Brunch will be served for **\$8.00 per person**. Childcare will be provided. You are also welcome to bring your own brown bag lunch. There is a "Sign-Up" sheet in the Narthex.



THE SEASON OF LENT

WHAT'S COOKING FOR SHROVE TUESDAY

Get ready for some mouth-watering southern style chicken, potato casserole, dirty beans and rice, and lots of delicious waffles!!

How about a little fun? How about "hot potato" blind folded? No selfies permitted. 😊

Tuesday, February 25th, 6:30pm to 8:30pm.
\$7.00 - Adults, \$5.00 - Kids (9-17yrs old),
Children under 9yrs old are Free.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Stand up and be counted as a member of God's Church. Enter into the Season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Come and be marked with the ashes of penitence. **Masses will be held on February 26th at 9am and 7pm.**

LENTEN PROGRAM

Father Neil will be conducting a **Lenten Program on Tuesday evenings** following our Meatless Supper where we will do Stations of the Cross, Evening Prayer as well as bible based activities. Please check the "Calendar At-A-Glance" on the back page for more details.

MEATLESS SUPPERS NOW ON TUESDAYS

Come to our simple Tuesday Meatless Suppers starting **March 3rd**. Please contact Karen Carlson to volunteer to cook, or sign-up on the Volunteer Sheet in the narthex. This is not a potluck. No desserts will be served.

TRINITARIAN NEWSPAPER RENEWAL

Renew or sign up for the Trinitarian, the official newspaper of the Anglican G-4 Communion. Contact Karen Carlson or look for information in the Narthex.