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The Parish Paper

OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Vol.34 No.53

The Sunday Next Before Advent

11/23/03

A Time of Crisis: A Time of Call (Part II)

What do we do now? We continue as we are. Above all we pray. God is gracious and the Lord Jesus is with us every moment. But now we must pray in particular for several concerns. First, for the Archbishop of Canterbury, for courage and patience to implement the decisions that were formulated by the Primates for "adequate Episcopal oversight" for those who need it. Second, for the Bishop of Georgia that he may find encouragement and strength in the fellowship of orthodox bishops in the Episcopal Church and throughout the Anglican world. Our Bishop has already appointed a commission to draft a new Canon for the Diocese of Georgia that addresses the ethical standards of the clergy. And third, pray for the Primates of the Anglican Communion that they may persevere in the defense and proclamation of the truth. These are brave men. They are not willing to compromise the gospel. They have already said that they will not yield, even if it means that the rich of the Episcopal Church cut off their aid money. According to reports on the internet, it seems that some have already made this threat.

And after our prayer we must act positively in relation to the rest of the diocese. We must encourage the weak hearted to be strong. We must affirm that true marriage is only that which is created by God as a union of male and female. We must repent of our own sins, and pray for all who are dis-obedient to God's commands, that we all might come to repentance and a better mind.

And beyond the diocese we must join in the efforts of organizations that are working for reform in the church. This includes the American Anglican Council, which has a special place now in facilitating the realignment of the Episcopal Church. Other organizations such as the [Prayer Book Society](#), [Forward in Faith](#), and [Ecclesia](#) are also worthy of our support.

Finally, I want to speak to you about our mission. We will continue with the educational mission of the Elliott House. That is something we can do here. But there is also something missing, and that is our fellowship with and support of Anglican Churches in the Global South. Those are the churches of our communion that are growing at a remarkable rate, and yet they have very little materially in comparison to us. Those are the churches, which have so little materially, but are strong in faith and doctrine, that are taking the risk to defend orthodox Anglicans, orthodox Episcopalians like us, even at the threat of wealthy liberal Episcopal-ians cutting off their aid.

I had an epiphany about this this past week. I was in Las Vegas for a meeting of Forward in Faith/North America. When I got off the plane I was shocked at the glitz and tacky indulgence that was already evident in the slot machines at the airport. That shock was reinforced as I took a taxi into town, with the hotels and advertisements that fill that city - glaring in the dim late afternoon sun. The glitz became intense in the hotel, full of mirrors and strange light.

After I got my room key, I began my way to my room, moving through the hotel with a thousand other feeble souls. And just as I rounded this large corner of the lobby, the first person that I laid eyes on, and almost bumped into, was Archbishop Bernard Malango of Central Africa. (You will remember that Bishop Malango visited us last December with his wife Charity.) Well, we embraced in the middle of that great flux of humanity, and with a twinkle in his eye, and that big broad smile, he called my name. For you it may seem just an anecdote. For me it was an epiphany. Bishop Malango, Primate of Central Africa, one of the principle authors of the Primates' recent statement from London had come to the same meeting. It was as if the Lord was saying, "I am here." And I was reassured that Christ is with us, not just in the tackiness of Las Vegas, but everywhere in this fallen world, and in this broken Episcopal Church. My hope is that we as a parish can have a greater intention and support for the poor but faithful churches of the Global South.

And finally there is this. We ourselves are in need of a deeper conversion. I do not mean that we are not all faithful Christians; I believe that we are. The Body of Christ is full of believers of different degrees and maturity. But our need now is to deepen our faith and our devotion to the Lord Jesus. We will need to be soldiers for Christ in the weeks and months ahead. Remember, at your Baptism you were signed with the sign of the cross in token that you would be a faithful soldier and servant of Jesus Christ until your life's end. Well dear friends, now is the time. It is a time for prayer and holiness and witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus. There is no vision without holiness of life and there is no holiness of life without charity. Hold fast to the truth in charity, and all shall be well. "All manner of thing shall be well."

The Rev. Dr. Michael L. Carreker

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