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THE LINE

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OF THE MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF ALL SAINTS

UNTO AGES OF AGES: AN OBITUARY

By The Right Rev. Winfield Mott

The Anglican Communion is very old. Her origins are lost in the mists of history, but possibly date from the First Century. There are certainly organized Christian communities, with bishops, in England by the end of the Third Century, before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxon settlers for whom the Communion is named, and who arrived hostile to the Faith. The Church herself appears autonomous, perhaps with connections to the great centers of Eastern Christianity. The early days are filled with tales of heroism, zeal and martyrdom, as the indigenous people of the British Isles accepted, and then spread, Christianity. They witnessed at home to their conquerors and abroad to the pagan inhabitants of the northern European forests.

In the Eighth Century, the Church gradually came under the control of the Roman Church, which was expanding its jurisdiction throughout western Europe. She was to remain within the Papal orbit for the next seven centuries. The great Reformation movements of the 16th Century brought significant changes and chaos, influenced more by continental

scholars and papal politics than by the earlier Celtic traditions of the land. In most of western Europe, the upheavals of the era resulted in unified populations in the many fiefdoms. They were either Lutheran, Reformed or Roman Catholic, seldom mixed together. But in England, no unity was achieved, despite forceful persecutions to attempt it. Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Romans, Puritans and more all contended, both within and outside the Church of England.

The Thirty-Nine Articles, an essentially Lutheran doctrinal statement (its similarity with the Augsburg Confession written several decades earlier is obvious), although with some Calvinistic aspects, was an attempt at orthodox consensus, enforced by Queen Elizabeth. But it failed to reach the desired unity, and by the next century, the Church of England herself was suppressed in favor of Cromwellian designs. The latter turned out to be so onerous that in a few years the bishops and liturgy were returned by popular demand,

The Convocation of the West Summary Statement

We are a missionary people living out the historical, Biblical Christian faith in the Anglican tradition.



and have been there ever since.

Yet by the next century again, unity and doctrinal consensus were still elusive. Rationalism, Methodism, and clerical torpor (including at the episcopal level) added to the chaos. The eventual orthodox reaction, the Oxford Movement, exploded into being, triggered by the great prophetic sermon titled “National Apostasy” by John Keble in 1833. It is important to note that it is precisely opposition to apostasy which motivated the founders of the Oxford Movement, and not some desire to improve liturgical or ceremonial conditions. Though these were part of the subsequent results, the focus was to recover the orthodox core of Faith from the intellectual and spiritual debris of what the Church had become.

The next century and a half were a hopeful time for the Church. The Evangelicals also were a rising phenomenon, and also in their own way called for a return to the core message of the Gospels. The British Empire, like the Roman Empire before it, became the vehicle by which the Faith could be spread to the lands which it covered, even those like the U.S. which became independent of the Empire, but

remained as nurseries for the Faith. Today, the Empire has ebbed, as they all do. But the Anglican Way continued as a global phenomenon.

Alas, the last half-century has seen a relapse into chaos worse than ever before. It can be traced easily through the history of the Lambeth Conference, a gathering every decade or so since 1867 of the Anglican bishops from around the world. Intended as a synodical council similar to those of the early Church, the recent gatherings at Lambeth have reflected the serious decline in the Anglican Communion. Agreement has become so impossible that the meetings are now devoted to listening without any attempt to reach conclusions. Large numbers of bishops, representing the majority of the world’s Anglicans, no longer attend, witnessing that they do not wish to be associated with the unscriptural heterodox views expounded. Other orthodox bishops attend, but do not commune in the general worship, stating that communion is “impaired.” National apostasy has now widened to become global apostasy, while being challenged by many faithful bishops who, however, do not control the instruments established to promote Anglican unity.



Lambeth Palace, photographed looking east across the River Thames
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In short, it is no longer possible to identify what Anglicans believe or practice. Any group has divergent opinions within it, but in Christianity those opinions fall within the umbrella of Scripture, as summarized by the Creeds. Today’s apostasy means coming away from under the umbrella to let the rains of all forms of heterodoxy pour down upon you. Even in 1833, it was not as bad as the contemporary gales of apostasy. It means that the Anglican corporate body has died, the Spirit has left, the organs have failed, receiving no coherent direction from the head. Only the physical remains are here, as trendy hierarchs preside over mostly empty, but valuable, real estate while interminable “indaba” discussion drones on, to no conclusion.

Obituaries are written about the past, the history of a life. But like all history writing, they serve best by guiding towards the future with the lessons of the past. To be sure, no longer

does Lambeth unite the Anglican world in confessing the one true Faith. No longer does the Archbishop of Canterbury preside as spokesman and titular leader of the world’s Anglicans. No longer can we share the Lord’s Table with other Anglicans, with

the assumption of the bonds of unity and a creedal belief in common. That and more is dead. Yet, before you dissolve into grief, wallowing in what we have lost, lift up your hearts to see the evidence of a brighter day.

Anglicanism may be dead, but many millions of faithful Anglicans all over the world stand firm in the Faith. The Spirit has left the corporate body, but has not left his faithful people. It is the Christian process that it is through dying and coming to life again that we enter and exist in the Body of Christ. The Spirit who notes “I make all things new” now leads us to a new way of being. “Anglican” ceases to have meaning or Divine presence. We cannot yet discern the exact nature of the new Way, except to know that it contains the old and eternal Truths, and the Spirit among us. We continue in the one, catholic Church, gathered in apostolic order around faithful bishops. Our brothers and sisters are of all tribes and nations, free from the divisions imposed by earthly authorities, confessing the one Lord Jesus Christ.

Rejoice, then, do not grieve the past nor fear the future. Anglicanism as an institutional reality is dead. But we are alive in the Spirit, and shall be unto ages of ages.

Our Church's Charism

By The Very Rev. Canon Michael Penfield

Two months ago I wrote about the goal set by our last Synod and Clericus. We decided that the Convocation of the West would be more focused as to what our purpose as a Church really is, and how we are to live this purpose every day. Then I promised to address our Focus Statement. However, before we address this Focus Statement, we have to address "the elephant in the room". There is something that has been haunting me that I believe we must address first. Without it, our whole discussion regarding our Church's Charism becomes useless. But once explained, it will help us to understand why this decision made at the last Synod is so important.

The question that must be addressed first is: Why do we exist? Or, to be more precise, why should our churches continue to exist? In other words, is there any unique purpose that an Anglican Church has? And, if not, then why can't we simply meld into another church? Without addressing this question, I fear that our efforts would be pointless. There is no real reason why we should go on or adopt any of these ideas if we really do not understand why we exist in the first place. And our

good bishop and the other vicars general for one very good reason have discussed these same questions.

Many of our churches in MDAS survive because the rectors do not take a salary, or they are the main financial source for the church, or both. And many of these same rectors are reaching the age when they want to or have to retire. In these cases, the question becomes what will happen to

their churches? Will they go on? Or will they fold and the parishioners start attending other churches? If we do not know why we should exist, then I am afraid many of these churches will disappear before the people realize what they are losing. We must know why we exist. We must understand why our Anglican faith is precious, and I would like to start this analysis with an analogy.

I would liken our faith to a beautiful woman. Have you ever been struck by the beauty of a certain woman even though, if you look at her closely, she really is not more beautiful than other women? In fact, sometimes she may be less beautiful. But what makes her truly beautiful is that she knows her worth. This is NOT the same as the woman who is vain, or self absorbed. This is not the woman who is constantly fretting about her beauty or what others think about her. No, this is the woman who knows of her intrinsic worth. She dresses in such a fashion that says, "I am worth it – I am worth the effort." She acts like she is worth it too. She is self-confident without being egotistical. This is true with churches as well.

Do our churches know their worth? If you want to know my opinion, I truly think they are worthy, but I am not too sure these churches believe it. I think many have inferiority complexes, and others do not see what they have that makes them so special. They need to discover what they have and what makes their Anglican faith so important to preserve. And one of these charisms that make our churches worthy is – pastoral care.

One of our priests shared with me this observation. He said that the Roman Catholic churches are too large for their priests to really care for their parishioners. They have Eucharistic ministers, for sure, but that is not the same. What makes us different and special is that our priests can have a more caring relationship with each parishioner. They can make hospital visits. They can come and bless homes. They can care in a more intimate way than those priests who serve three thousand families. And this is what makes us important. This is one of the things that make us unique. And this is something we must point out and develop in each of our parishes.

Remember when I wrote in my last article that the Synod decided on and defined three goals that we will work to achieve? They are:

- *Making disciples of Jesus Christ*
- *Bearing fruit in every good work*
- *And increasing in the knowledge and love of God.*

These are great goals, but they are basic to our nature as Christians. They do not distinguish us from any other Christian



group. We are out to convert the world because we know we have something imperative that must be shared: the secret of eternal life. We want everyone to become Christians because Christ is life. And Christ Himself tells us this:

Jesus said to [Thomas], "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." [John 14:6]

But, again, all Christians share this same belief. What sets us apart is that we are Anglicans, which means that our pastoral care is more personal. What sets us apart from other Anglicans is that we are Reformed Catholics – reformed in our Christian faith, but still keeping our Catholic faith and traditions as passed down by and through the united Church before the Great Schism of 1045 AD that split the Church in two. And this brings us to a very important aspect of our faith. It brings us to our Focus Statement:

"OUR FOCUS

Guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit:

- *We are committed to glorifying God in thought, word, and deed. (Life and Worship)*
- *We are committed to passing on the ancient Christian faith as it has been delivered through the Anglican tradition. (Evangelism, Discipleship, Catechesis, Commitment to Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis)*
- *We are committed to cultivating and equipping the whole people of God for the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. (Discipleship and Evangelism)"*

They say that converts are the most militant. They have changed for a reason. I am such a person. I converted from Roman Catholicism to Anglicanism and, although I truly love my Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, there are several reasons why I am Anglican. And these reasons actually explain our focus statement. Let's take each one in turn.

Glorifying God in thought, word, and deed.

The initial reason why I came to an Anglican Church is because the Catholic churches I attended seemed to have lost their way. They were not glorifying God; they were glorifying their neighbors; they were glorifying the Community. In other words, instead of lifting me up to Heaven, these churches kept me earthbound.

The first Anglican service I attended was Morning Prayer. It did not matter to me that we did not receive Holy Communion that Sunday. What mattered was that we were worshipping the Lord in reverence, in holiness, in beauty and in awe. This is for what I hungered.

Passing on the ancient Christian faith as it has been delivered through the Anglican tradition.

"Passing on" the ancient Faith means preserving it. This is not rigor mortis. This is not resisting change just because "we have always done it this way." No. Preserving the ancient Faith is much more thoughtful than that. There must be a reason behind what is being passed on. In one of the more controversial positions – the all-male priesthood and

episcopate – understanding the position is understanding why the early ancient Church decided to have an all-male priesthood and episcopate. This means knowing that this issue was discussed and settled by the Church. But it also means knowing what the reasons were behind this decision. And, what I love about Anglicanism is that the Church does not think that the laity should not know these things. In fact, the Anglican faith believes that all believers should be well-educated in their faith.

So catechism becomes quite important, both for new parishioners and long-time parishioners. Knowing why we believe what we believe is as important as being able to state what we believe. And this brings me to the second reason I became Anglican. In the Roman Church, my knowledge was not growing, and therefore, my faith was not growing. It had stalled. I could attend church and hear the priest speak (often about social issues), but never about what the lessons for the day meant. However, I found that in the Anglican Church my faith started to grow quickly. And this was achieved mostly through the sermons on Sunday.

But, what I did not receive was a good catechism, and that is quite important. I really wasn't catechized until I started studying for the diaconate – and this is not right. Everyone needs to be catechized into the faith, even some long time Anglicans! We need to do this, and the rector needs to start this process.

This brings us to two very important words: *Orthodoxy* and *Orthopraxis*. These are two technical words that we all should know: *Orthodoxy* is a "right" faith; *Orthopraxis* is a "right" conduct. Believing all that is contained in the Nicene Creed is being orthodox in our faith. Conducting our actions, our ethics and our lives in conformity with the faith is orthopraxis. I have found that orthopraxis takes time. To paraphrase Saint Paul, for most of us, what we know is right to do, we often don't do, and what we know we should not do, we often do. It takes time, and it takes understanding and knowledge. And it takes a church that supports us in our Christian growth and Anglican understanding.

Cultivating and equipping the whole people of God for the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world

If we are serious about making better Christians of us all, if we are serious about growing in our faith, this last goal is crucial. But I would add, we need to cultivate and equip our people in understanding what it means to be Anglican and equip our parishioners as to why we have become (or continue to be) an Anglican. If we do not do this, then our faith WILL die out. We will meld into any one of the other orthodox, Christian faiths. And what we have, what makes us unique, what is precious that can never be recovered, will be lost forever.

God bless.



Analysis of the Seven Churches in Revelation: Laodicea

By The Very Rev. Canon Michael Penfield

This is our seventh and last article discussing the Seven Churches in the Book of Revelation. We embarked on this daunting task many months ago based on our call to use this past Lent as a period of discernment, not just for our individual churches, but also for our Convocations and for the Missionary Diocese of All Saints.

As we may all know, it is our goal to examine each of these seven churches to see what we can do in order to be a church and a Diocese that is a beacon of faith and hope and a light to the world. And while we pray for discernment, we need to remember:

*Unless the Lord builds the house,**

Their labor is in vain who build it.

*Unless the Lord keeps the city,**

The watchman keeps vigil in vain. [Psalm 127:1-

2; BCP 2019 page 444]

In an effort to help us in our prayers to rightly see what we must do, we now continue our analyses with the seventh of the Seven Churches – Laodicea:

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;’ and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will

come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” [Revelation 3:14-22]

As I read what others wrote about Laodicea, I discovered that the analysis involving this church seems consistent across denominational lines. Unlike some of the other churches, there seems to be no difference in analysis whether the scholar is Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or Protestant. Maybe this is because the allusions are not historically vague or culturally specific. Or maybe because the statement is very clear. Whatever the reason, all three groups start with an analysis of the city itself because it helps explain Christ’s statements to this church.

Laodicea, at this time, was a very prosperous commercial city, with one of the finest medical academies in the ancient world. It was about forty miles southeast of Philadelphia and was known both for its banking and its black wool textiles. It was also known for its alleged medicinal eye salve made from the clay that exists around this city. In fact, Laodicea was so prosperous that it was one of the few cities that rebuilt itself without any government aid after an earthquake in 60 A.D. devastated the area. However, it is because of these earthquakes that this city was eventually destroyed and abandoned.

With these facts in mind, let us now turn to our passage:

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.”

Here we have one of the most interesting references in the Bible. Nowhere else does Jesus refer to Himself as “The Amen.”

All of us have said, “Amen,” at the end of a prayer, but how many know what it really means? We may sense that it is a

Hebrew acclamation, but it is actually more than this. It conveys a sense that what is being said is reliable, trustworthy, and true.

As used here in Revelation, Biblical Scholars have looked at two references. The first is Isaiah:

*That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in **the God of truth**; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by **the God of truth**; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. [Isaiah 65:16]*

Scholars have noted that a more accurate translation of the phrase “the God of truth” is “the God of Amen.”

In Second Corinthians, we have this:

*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, **and in him Amen**, unto the glory of God by us. [2 Cor. 1:19-20]*

In this section of Revelation, “Amen” becomes the divine title of Christ. This tells us that Jesus embodies the faithfulness of God. He is the Truth of God. And He is the final ratification and accomplishment of the promise of God.

Then we have an additional reference to Christ that has been misinterpreted by some. Jesus says He is “the beginning of the creation of God.” The ancient heresy of the Arians and the modern Jehovah Witnesses have used the word “beginning” to claim that Christ was created, thus denying His divinity and **His** eternal existence. But the translation of the Greek word *arche* as “beginning” is not as accurate as it could have been. A more accurate translation of the Greek would have been “source” or “origin.”

Christ is “the origin of the creation of God.” Translated this way, this phrase supports our belief that, through Christ, all was created. He is the Alpha; He is the Beginning. He is the Word of God that existed before anything existed:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not an thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” [John 1:1-4]

Christ is the creative Word and Wisdom of God that is the

supreme Amen of God. This is what Jesus is telling us in this very short but important reference to Himself.

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”

Up, until now, whenever Christ has said, “I know thy works;” it has been to say to the church that their works have been good. They may have had other problems, but usually this phrase begins a commendation for these churches. However, for Laodicea, it is a condemnation. Their works are neither cold nor hot. They are tepid, lukewarm, and so disgusting that Christ says that He will spit them out.

Now, to the average Laodicean, this analogy would have

been powerful. Six miles from Laodicea are the hot springs of Hierapolis. However, by the time this spring water got to Laodicea, it was lukewarm and so contaminated with minerals that it was nauseating and impossible to drink. Likewise, the aqueduct built by the Laodiceans to bring cold waters from the mountains, didn’t. Unlike nearby Colossae, by the time the water got to Laodicea, it was lukewarm. This problem also existed in their church. No one was on fire with the faith, and no one was cold to the faith either. They were just lukewarm. And, to Christ, this is worse than being hot or cold.

At this point I would like to convey a thought that a Protestant Biblical scholar wrote that I think is crucial in our analysis. He wrote that this message to the church in Laodicea was “heart-searching.” In other words, from anyone outside looking in, there is no way that we can ever judge whether someone’s

faith is lukewarm. It is beyond our abilities. Only God knows what is in the hearts of others. And only God and we know what is in our own hearts. And being “lukewarm” is a state of the heart.

We can be “great” Christians, praising God, worshipping every Sunday, and giving to charity. But, if our hearts are lukewarm, if these things are only window-dressing, then our faith is revolting to God. This is the sin in which many scribes and Pharisees engaged. Conversely, there may be someone meekly sitting in the back of the church who does not appear to be “on



fire” with the faith, but in his heart, his faith is more alive, more firm, and more powerful than the most vocal member of the church. He or she may be spreading the Gospel and showing the love of God in his or her actions, but we may not be aware because we do not see them outside of church. So, this is my caution: Do not judge anyone in our churches as to whether their faith is lukewarm. None of us know for sure unless we get to see their faith put into action. However, no one is stopping us from looking into our own hearts to see if our faith is hot, cold, or lukewarm.

Because thou sayest, ‘I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;’ and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Again, Christ uses allusions to which the Laodiceans would instantly understand. They are wealthy. So purchasing the gold that Christ offers will make sense. But, it should also make sense to us, as well. What is this gold that has been tried in the fire? It is our faith, of course. Our religion has been bought by the blood of Christ and has been forged in the fires of persecution. This makes it more precious than gold.

The white raiment to clothe the Laodicean speaks on two levels. First, their trade was in black wool, so there is a note of irony. Second, as was referenced before, the white robes are indicative of the robes worn by the saints in light and worn by the angels. These white robes were mentioned in the letter to Sardis and are mentioned again in Revelation. [See Chapters 4:4; 6:11; 7:9; and 19:14]

Finally, the anointing of the eyes with the “eyesalve” of Christ is clearly a reference to the eye salve trade of the Laodiceans. Modern scientists have tested the clay used in this ancient salve to see if there are any real medicinal properties. It turns out that there are none. But we know that Christ’s salve has caused both the physically and spiritually blind to see. And this is what Jesus is promising the Laodicean church if they will repent and change.

This is the amazing thing about our God. No matter how far we have fallen, He is constantly trying to bring us back! In this passage, God is saying that, because the Laodicean Church is materially well-off, they think they are rich. But spiritually, they are poor. They need to wake up and see their own spiritual poverty. And Christ is willing to help them and bring them back. He wants to sell them the “gold tried in the fire,” the “white raiment,” and the “eyesalve” that will make them rich in the faith, clothed in righteousness, and sighted to see what God wants of them. And He wants to do this because He loves them. *“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”*

We in the Convocation of the West of the Missionary Diocese of All Saints should take this part of the message to heart. Although some of our churches are struggling financially, others are very blessed financially. Although these churches are not wealthy and cannot do whatever they want to do, they are financially comfortable.

But financial comfort may lead to spiritual complacency if we are not careful. We still need to worship God: we still need to grow in our faith; we still need to reach out and spread the word of God; and we still need to help those less fortunate than ourselves. These are the hallmarks of Christianity. These are the things of which we need never to lose sight.

Then there comes a very interesting passage:

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

J. Vernon McGee wrote that he did not believe this section is only for the church in Laodicea. Rather, it is for all seven churches and for us as well. To my knowledge, he is the only one who made this point, and I think it is a good one. Although this part ends with the same phrase used at the end of each passage for each church, *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,”* and may have been addressed to Laodicea, it is true for all of us.

Christ will never force us to believe. It has to be a free choice. It has to be a gracious act of love. It has to be our choice to let Him in – in our house, in our lives, and in our hearts. If we do not choose to let Christ in, He will remain outside, knocking.

But, if we let Jesus in, we are given two wonderful gifts.

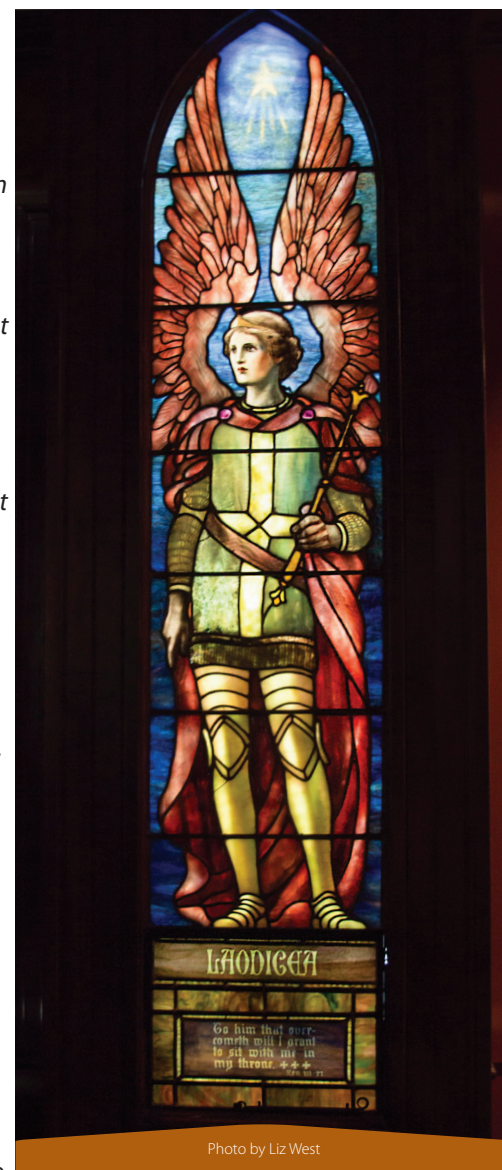


Photo by Liz West

In this life, we are given the gift of the great spiritual banquet. We “sup” with Christ every time we partake in Holy Communion. When we sup with Christ in Holy Communion, He is in us, and we are in Him. And in the next life, we are given the gift of eternal life basking in the love of God. This is the throne of which Christ speaks. And it is worth the small price we pay in this life being a disciple of Jesus the Christ.

The church in Laodicea, like the church in Sardis, is a frightening look at our human, fallen nature. Faith can be lukewarm and can even die. This is why it is so important to nurture and grow our faith. If we do not, we are destined to go the way of Laodicea. But if we do grow our faith, then we are promised Christ’s love, support, and strength. We are also promised the crown that “fadeth not away.” So, let us look at ourselves and pray. Let us pray that God will show us which church we are, and what we must do to be His church here on earth.

And now I must leave you with this poem that is in the Cathedral at Lübeck, Germany:

“Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us:

Ye call Me Master and obey Me not.
Ye call Me Light and see Me not.
Ye call Me Way and walk Me not.
Ye call Me Life and choose Me not.
Ye call Me Wise and follow Me not.
Ye call Me Fair and love Me not.
Ye call Me Rich and ask Me not.
Ye call Me Eternal and seek Me not.
Ye call Me Noble and serve Me not.
Ye call Me Gracious and trust Me not.
Ye call Me Might and honor Me not.
Ye call Me Just and fear Me not.
If I condemn you, blame Me not.”

It is a thought worth contemplating when praying about our own faith. God bless.

Amen.

▶▶ Request for a Bishop Coadjutor ◀◀

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Bishop Lipka has informally notified the ACNA that we will be requesting a Bishop Coadjutor for our Diocese. He will make the formal request when the College of Bishops meets in September. For this reason, I am asking all of you for prayers that the Holy Spirit will guide the College of Bishops to allow this selection and will guide our Diocese to select the right man for this position.

To that end, the Standing Committee will be looking for individuals to be on the Search Committee. Please also pray that the Holy Spirit will guide the Standing Committee in this matter. We need qualified individuals from all three Convocations.

God bless,
Fr. Michael Penfield
Your Vicar General