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“such love o’erflowing”

Christmas

How Brightly Beams the Morning Star

How brightly beams the morning star.

What sudden radiance from afar

Doth glad us with its shining?

Thy word Jesus,

Truly feeds us,

Rightly leads us,

Life bestowing

Praise, oh praise such love o’erflowing

The ray of God that breaks our night

And fills the darken’d souls with light,

Who long for truth were pining.

Thy word Jesus,

Truly feeds us,

Rightly leads us,

Life bestowing

Praise, oh praise such love o’erflowing

words by Philipp Nicolai

“We have found a new and living Way”

Epiphany

Rt. Rev. William S.H. Downey

Sermon, Epiphany Sunday, 2003

The Feast of Epiphany means “manifestation” or “revelation.” It is the oldest of the Christmas Feasts and is still celebrated on January 6th as the major feast of the season in Eastern Churches. The feast probably originated in those churches in the Middle East strongly influenced by the Gospel of John, who proclaims of Jesus Christ: And the Word became flesh, and made his dwelling with us, and we saw his glory, the glory of the Fathers Son full of grace and Truth. (JN1:14) And as the “True Light which enlightens everyone,” Jesus came not only that we might see his glory but also that we might share in it. “From His fullness we have all received, grace for grace.”

The feast from the beginning has always been associated with the Baptism of Our Lord. Later in the Western church it became associated with the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles and the Magi became the central figures (apart from Our Lord) in the day’s festivities. But whether the story is related to the Baptism or the manifestation before the Three Kings there is a heavy emphasis on the Trinity. In the Baptism **FATHER, SON,** and **DOVE,** in the Magi Story we have the Three Kings, the three gifts. This all points to Trinity in Manifestation and also revealed in the individual as the Higher Self in the qualities of **WILL, LOVE, ACTIVITY.**

All during Advent we prepared for His Coming, then at Christmas we celebrated His arrival. Now at Epiphany we join the Wise Men of all ages who come to worship Him and offer their best gifts.

You will remember that all the festivals of the Church are not only commemorations of historical significance that happened in the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. No, these festivals are also symbolic of great events which occur in the Life of each one of us as we tread the Path of Christ. At Advent we await with anticipation His coming within our Soul—at Christmas we rejoice at His birth once again in our own heart.

Now at Epiphany, twelve days after the festival of Christmas, it is intended to translate all of that joy into action! Up until now all the preparation and all the celebration has been for the most part interior. Now the time has come for the Christ to become **manifest** to the World. For that is the meaning of the word *epiphany*: to show forth... to shine forth.... to manifest.

And now we look to the Magi within to discover what this great symbol of the Christ manifestation is. The three wise men represent the dedicated Physical Body, Emotional Body and Mental Body. These dedicated consecrated components produce, bring, and present the three gifts.

The Myrrh represents the bitterness and pain and sorrow of the lower nature within us before it has died out to self and selfishness. The root cause of all of our troubles is selfishness, the belief that we are separate from our fellows. That we are somehow unique or different. That we are either better than those around us, which is the sin of Pride or that we are some how not as good as others or less than which is the sin of Pride in reverse. Either way it is self-absorption or self-obsession. So Myrrh speaks of the death of the lower personality the petty small self. St Paul says we must die to self that Christ may live within us. The willingness to allow that lower self to die is indeed a gift!

The Frankincense is the symbol of the transmutation of our lower self into the Higher Self the Christ Nature. The incense speaks of the sweetness of the Soul lifted in aspiration to the Christ within. The offering of the Emotional Nature the lifting of our hearts in Love and aspiration it too is a Gift!

And finally the Gold is that precious part of each person. The True Self which we are striving to manifest or show forth. It is the spark of Divinity which lies hidden deep within the heart of each person. The Gospel of St John says it is the true Light that lights every person coming into the World.

When that experience of the transmutation of the lower self into the Higher Self takes place a change happens in the life of the Christian Initiate. Notice our Gospel this morning says “And being warned of God in a dream not to return to Herod they departed by another way”. Your Life is changed and you cannot return to the old way. The old way no longer works. Old habits of the body, or of emotions, or of thinking have failed. One has found a new and Living Way!

There is an ancient saying, “When you have found the beginning of the WAY, the Star of your soul will show its Light.” The means of following the Star and finding the way I have just outlined may be implemented through prayer, meditation and the practice of good works. But these practices, as good and laudable as they are, only lead to the discovery of that Star. We need not look for the Light outside, we need not enkindle the light, It already exists. It is the nature of light to Shine. You do not make it shine, you simply let it shine! “Let your Light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify their Father which is in Heaven.”

One of the founding Bishops of the Liberal Catholic Church, +C.W. Leadbeater, said, “We who love the Star should ourselves be as stars to help to illumine the world in which we live, each according to his or her capacity to shine and to show forth in purity, in gentleness and in steadfastness the Light that is within us.”

Epiphany Blessings.



Adoration of the Magi by El Greco, 1568.
Museo Soumaya, Mexico City

The Priest

Rev. Brian Satterlee, Church of St. Albert

I am the one who waits
 not like a spider that waits in the web
 but rather more like the hen that waits on the egg
 for the good thing that will come to hatch
 I am the one who waits
 good maybe but not great
 and some day in some small place you will come in
 and in no small way you will remember His name
 remember the day and even yes, confess your name
 I will not be surprised
 I am the one who waits
 you sit in the pew
 or has the pew got you!
 your life may seem small
 at times even not at all
 sometimes the one you hate
 my job to help you wait
 I am the one who waits
 just another like you who waits
 I am the one who waits
 with the one who waits the one who wants
 the one who wants
 no more than just your love.



*Photo of Fr. Brian Satterlee at the Triennial 2014,
 provided by Tami Gonzales, St Raphael Church Center*

“a call to attention, to consideration, to wakefulness”

Attention, Priorities, Love: Making the Holidays Holy

Donna Colby, St. Gabriel & All Angels Church

Sermon for Advent Sunday 2013

The four weeks before Christmas are, together, called Advent. The word *advent* means an arrival of something notable, important, and awaited. Advent, as a time in the Christian Year, is not just a hearkening and anticipation of Christmas. Advent is an arrival itself. The precious holiday season has begun.

What has arrived? It's **an invitation, placed in our spiritual mailbox**, embossed in the beautiful colors of Advent—purple, gold, rose. It invites us to go for it, to make the spiritual possibilities of this season a priority, because it is notable, it's of use to us. Advent gives us a chance for a strong and rich beginning to the sequence of the whole Church Year which is designed to help us on our journey, to help with our awakening.

But, we might ask, if the Christ Light, the indwelling divinity within each of us, is ever-present, always available, then why do we have to do anything at all? Why does it need to be born or awakened?

We're told that it's because of ignorance, a word often thought of as stupidity or lack of knowledge, but at its root is the verb ignore—to take no notice of, pay no attention to. This glorious reality can remain hidden to a larger or smaller degree if we pay little attention to it, if we're just caught up in being busy. It's right under our noses, but we can ignore—not pay attention to—the splendor of it.

Advent is a call to attention, to consideration, to wakefulness, to what this season is really about.

This invitation, arriving in our spiritual mailbox, has a few instructions, like invitations generally do (how you get there, what to bring, etc.), and these instructions help us set ourselves deliberately on the spiritual path of the Christmas season, so we can experience and live the full glory of what it has to offer.

Some of these instructions are given to us in the Epistle and Gospel readings from the first Sunday in Advent: St. Paul talks of paying dues in the form of tribute, custom and honor. He's speaking to the Romans, who have an ingrained sense of the enforced paying of dues. But once he establishes a context, he shifts gears and says:

“Love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

In the Christmas season, we can get caught up in the tribute, custom, obligation, value of gifts, and all the rest—what we believe is expected of us. But if love is dominant, the emphasis changes and the tribute and honor is given from the heart rather than obligation.

“Awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

Pay attention. The glorious reality of Divine Life is right under our noses. Not far away.

St. Luke, in the Gospel reading instructs us to:

“Look up, lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.”

Same message—pay attention so you don't miss out on the glorious possibilities.

“Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and with the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

Applied to this season, Christmas can arrive before we know it and catch us unawares, if we have been so “overcharged” with the busy details of decorating, gift buying, attending events, and other holiday “surfeiting and cares of this life.” We may then realize that we haven't taken the time to settle into the deepest meaning and significance of the Christmas season.

continued...

So here we have this invitation in our hands. Will we RSVP? Will we step into this opportunity to have a holiday season that is truly made up of Holy Days—for that, of course, is the meaning of the word holiday. It's an ancient holiness that is always new. It's a matter of attention, priorities, and remembering—not ignoring—the tremendous potential of the Christmas season and on through the whole Church Year, starting with the four weeks of Advent.



Scenes from the Triennial. Clockwise from upper left: Bp William Downey & Bp Graham Wale; Episcopal Benediction; Bp Gaspar Torres ordaining Eddie Gonzales to the subdiaconate, with Fr Douglas Bess and Fr David Guillen; Sr Mellie Brown, Bp William, Rev Eddie Gonzales and Mrs Tami Gonzales; Bp William & newly ordained Deacon Joseph Seehusen.

View more photos at:

<http://www.thelccusa.org/about/galleries/triennial-2014/>



PROVINCIAL NEWS

Sr. Kathleen Clute and Parish Correspondents

Provincial News

General Episcopal Synod, 2016

For the one hundredth anniversary of the Founding of The Liberal Catholic Church, the General Episcopal Synod will meet at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church, Rio Rancho, New Mexico, in February 2016. It is a very great honor for our Province to host the GES. While only bishops participate in the GES sessions, many services and other events will be planned, at which all laity and clergy are welcome. We hope that you will come as well.

Many volunteers will be needed for our Province to give the visiting Bishops the wonderful experience they deserve. If you are interested in assisting—as clergy, server, musician, host, or in any other capacity, including **before** the GES—please contact Sr. Kathleen Clute, Provincial Secretary, secretary@thelccusa.org.

Board of Trustees Election at Provincial Assembly

The Provincial Assembly elected the following members of the Board of Trustees, whose terms were expiring, to new six-year terms on the Board: the Very Rev. Canon Milton R. Shaw, Fr. Brian Satterlee, and Sr. Kathleen Clute. Later at the Triennial, the Board held a meeting and voted to have the three newly-elected Trustees retain their previous offices. The current Board of Trustees consists of:

The Rt. Rev. William S.H. Downey, President *ex officio*

Rev. Brian Satterlee, Vice-President

The Very Rev. Canon Milton R. Shaw, Treasurer

Sr. Kathleen Clute, Secretary

Rev. Timothy Donovan

Rev. James Voirol

Mrs. Melinda Arndt

Order of Our Lady: Deaconess Admissions

On Sunday, October 12, at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church in Rio Rancho, NM, Bishop Downey admitted three members of the Order of Our Lady to the office of Deaconess. Sr. Kim Berget and Sr. Mary Arthen Donovan, from Queen of Angels, and Sr. Kathleen Clute, from St. Michael the Protector, have been active in the Order since January 2011 and will continue to serve their parishes and The Liberal Catholic Church in the ministries they have already pursued.



Sr. Mary Arthen, Sr. Kim, & Sr. Kathleen, with Bp. William.

Parish News

St. Gabriel & All Angels, Fairfield, Iowa

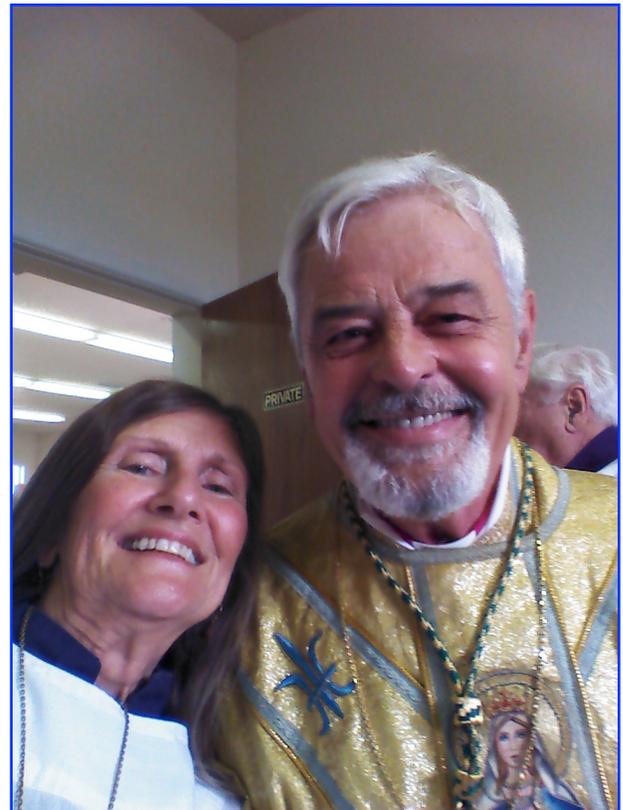
Study Groups: This year we have enjoyed two study groups organized by Donna Colby. The first focused on the Intents and sequential themes of the Liberal Catholic liturgy. Meetings were held monthly, each meeting focusing on the month ahead, so that each person could go more deeply into the knowledge and experience of the Church Year in their own lives. Discussions were rich and heartfelt, always taking the group to unexpected places and creating a closer connection among us all.

After a summer break, a new study group began, with the theme of “Gaining a Sacred Relationship to Time” and using the book *Music of Silence* by Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, as inspiration. This group is helping participants develop a more conscious attentiveness to the details of each day and how to bring prayer and a sacred perspective into ordinary activities. The meetings are in the evenings and each one ends with the beautiful Compline service from the LCC liturgy.

Triennial, October 2014: A big “Thank You” to Our Lady Queen of Angels for hosting the Triennial in Rio Rancho. Many members of St. Gabriel and All Angels came away with treasured photos and rich memories. Here are a few:



Many lively discussions took place in the parish hall of Our Lady Queen of Angels.



Melinda Arndt of Fairfield was among those who ‘selfied’ with Bp. Graham after Sunday’s Holy Eucharist.

Christmas Rosary: Forty four members attended the annual Christmas Rosary hosted by Peter and Sue Huggins at their home on Saturday, December 13. The Rosary was introduced by Deaconess Lucinda Hall, who concluded with a short reading from Julian of Norwich. Fr. James Palmer and Fr. Steven Arndt served Holy Communion. A potluck lunch started a time of merry fellowship, followed by group singing of Christmas songs

with Ann Bosold playing the keyboard. It was a lovely event in beautiful surroundings with uplifting fellowship all around.

Sylvia Richards

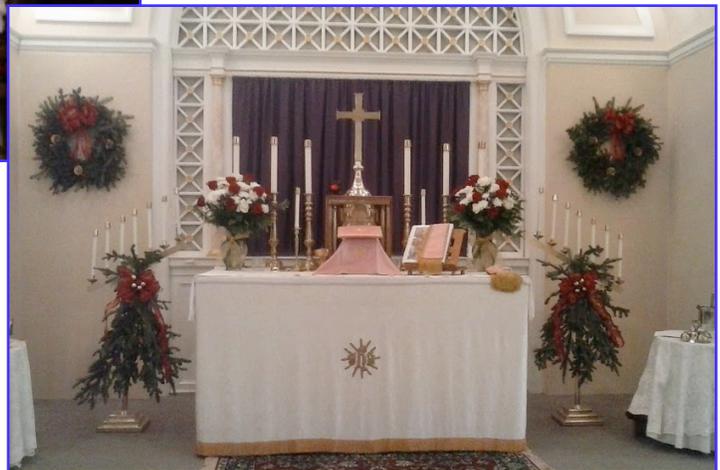
Clockwise from Bottom Left:

Rosary at the Huggins'

Singing carols

Fun & merriment, finale to Christmas carols

Altar decorations for 3rd Sunday in Advent



Notice from the Church of St. Francis, Villa Park, Illinois

St. Francis is a lovely church just west of the Chicago 'loop.' Following the retirement of our beloved deaconess Julie Hamilton, the attached parsonage is vacant and available for TLCC clergy who may be coming through town. We might even consider a long term arrangement. We do invite priests and bishops to consider staying with us and joining in our celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Please contact our rector Fr. Terrence Metz, or our senior warden Dawn Regnier, by phone at 630-834-3320.

SAVE THE DATES!

The General Episcopal Synod

February 3-15, 2016

and

The Centenary

of

The Liberal Catholic Church

February 12-15, 2016

Our Lady Queen of Angels Church
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Highlights

Daily Liturgy

including services in Spanish and French

Our Bishops from around the World

Special Events & Tours

Guest Speaker: Richard Smoley

author of *Inner Christianity: A Guide to the Esoteric Tradition*

US Clergy & Laity are warmly invited.

Hotel details will be published soon on TheLCCUSA.org
and announced on the Provincial Facebook page.

Join us for fellowship & inspiration!

Volunteers are still needed.

Email: secretary@thelccusa.org

UBIQUE

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St. Gabriel & All Angels, Fairfield,
Iowa; December 14, 2014.

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and by Tami Gonzales, St. Raphael
Church Center.

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