

# The Centurion

The Parish Magazine of St. Alban's Church

1011 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Maryland, 21085



My dear People:

As summer begins and people begin traveling to and fro I would be remiss if I didn't remind you to please stay current with your giving! The church does not stop receiving bills during the summer months, so we need your faithful giving to keep our doors open and everything up and running. If you can't put cash or a check into the offering plate don't forget that you may give with a card safely and securely online via the parish website, or with a card/device at the payment kiosk in the parish hall. If you use the kiosk, be sure to sign your receipt and place it in the glass container, or in the offering plate, so your giving statement is properly credited. I do hope that you will make it out to some of our summer events that we will be offering: Grace, Grit, and Thanksgiving (GG&T); Men's Group; Summer Prayer Series, etc. All of these activities involve fellowship with your fellow believers. Many of them have great food! And sometimes there is live musical entertainment offered by the parish band: Flash Gordon & the Holy Rollers (with Rockin' Roy on the rhythm guitar, and Stoner Steph on percussion). Check out our social media and announcements for when these will be happening.

Summer is a time when everything grows... the grass, trees, flowers, etc. It is also a time when we can really grow spiritually. One of the reasons we clergy wear green vestments at church during the summer/fall season of Trinitytide is because it symbolizes growth... spiritual growth! We spend the first part of the ecclesiastical year (Advent-Pentecost) reliving the earthly ministry and life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then we spend the second half of the year (Trinitytide) reflecting on the mystery of his teaching and what it all means for us. Summer is not the time to go on 'spiritual' vacation! Let us stay sharp and focused on growing in godliness and righteousness by the grace of almighty God. We mustn't forget that weeds also grow in the summertime. One way or another, *something* is going to grow. The same is true in our spiritual life. If we are not growing in godliness and love of God, then it means that spiritual weeds are growing up in our lives (e.g. the Parable of the Sower).

So make plans on how you are going to maintain your spiritual development this summer. Find a spiritual classic to read. Do an in depth study of a book of the Bible. Try out a church activity that you have never tried before (e.g. Holy Day services, GG&T, the Rector's Forum, pray the rosary, etc.). Just do something —anything— that will help keep the weeds down and out of your spiritual life, and that will keep the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) growing within you.

Faithfully, your priest,

*J. Gordon Anderson*

July 2023

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UPCOMING PRAYER BOOK  
HOLY DAYS:

**Jul 4th - Independence Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Jul 25th - St. James**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Aug 24th - St. Bartholomew**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Sep 20th & 22nd - Ember Day**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Sep 21st - St. Matthew**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Sep 29th - St. Michael**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Oct 19th - St. Luke**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

**Oct 27th - Ss. Simon & Jude (vigil)**

Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

Please see the parish website for the complete list of Sunday and Holy Day services offered each month.

[www.saintalbansjoppa.org](http://www.saintalbansjoppa.org)

THEOLOGY: *The Articles of Religion — Article XXV. Of the Sacraments*

This month we continue our look at some of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. We pick up with Article 25 *Of the Sacraments*. It is divided into three sections. Each section is printed in italics and is followed by commentary on its meaning.

*“SACRAMENTS ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men’s profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God’s good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.*

This part of Article 25 is against the more extreme views of some of the Reformers (especially Zwingli and his followers) who believed that sacraments were purely outward signs that a person had come to faith in Christ. These people did not believe that the sacraments ‘do anything’ in people... that they do not convey the grace of God. The Article states that while the sacraments are indeed outward signs —“*tokens of Christian men’s profession*”— they are also much more than that. They are “*effectual signs of grace... by which he doth work invisibly in us.*” In other words, God uses them to communicate to us the mystery that they signify. In Holy Baptism we die and rise with Christ, becoming new creations in him. (Romans 6:1-10) In the Holy Eucharist we receive the Body and Blood of Christ and are thereby spiritually nourished and sanctified. (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

*There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.*

This part of Article 25 declares that there are only two sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Eucharist. It goes on to declare that the other five traditional sacraments of the Church “*are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel.*” The author of the Article, Archbishop Cranmer, goes on to explain why. 1) Some have grown out of a corrupt following of the Apostles. 2) Some are states of life, and do not have the characteristics of the traditional two sacraments. This needs to be unpacked a bit. The article does not hold the five sacraments of confirmation, penance, matrimony, ordination, and unction to be “Sacraments

of the Gospel” for the very technical reason that they do not have an outward sign attached to them. Baptism has water, Eucharist has bread and wine... but what about penance? What about matrimony? Etc. There is no outward sign appointed for these in the Bible. The other reason the Articles relegate them to, as it were, a ‘second-tier’ status, is because at least two of them — marriage and ordination— are simply states of life to which not everyone is called. That ties in with what the Catechism says: there are only two sacraments “generally necessary for salvation (i.e. Baptism and Holy Eucharist)”. Since the other five are not “generally necessary” for salvation, they do not have the same level of importance as the other two.

But does that mean these “commonly called” sacraments are not sacraments at all? Hardly. Each of them clearly have a biblical foundation and were instituted in some way —directly or indirectly— by our Lord Jesus Christ. Each of them can be found in the Book of Common Prayer, and some are mentioned in the Book of Homilies (e.g. Holy Orders). Confirmation was originally part of Baptism in the west. And one could certainly argue that Holy Orders are necessary for salvation inasmuch as there must be a priest or bishop to consecrate bread and wine for the Holy Communion service! So there is something special and unique about the five lesser sacraments. What the Church does therefore is call them ‘Ecclesial Sacraments’ because it was she who, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, articulated and defined these rites as sacraments. So this part of Article 25 is rather ‘fussy’ and narrow when we really look at it.

Article 25 continues: *The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.*” In the late Middle Ages in England Holy Communion —the act of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ— had fallen to an all time low. Most people would make their communion once a year at Easter. Instead of making their communion people were content to simply adore Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament as it was elevated by the priest at the consecration. The point of this part of Article 25 is that the Body and Blood of Christ were meant to be consumed by the faithful... not simply looked upon, or carried about in a procession. In our own day and age there is no fear of people not making their communions. *(Please turn to the next page.)*

*Continued from the previous page...*

If anything we have the opposite problem today. Many people are not spiritually disposed to receive Holy Communion. They ought to come to examine themselves and repent of their sin before presuming to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, which is what the First and Second Exhortations in the Book of Common Prayer indicate. (pp. 85-88) The Article does actually warn against receiving the sacrament unworthily, but for some reason that part never gets much attention even though it is entirely biblical. Here at Saint Alban's—and indeed at most Anglican parishes today—we have the best of both worlds! We may adore Christ present in the Sacrament and then we are encouraged to come up to the altar rail and gladly receive him under the forms of bread and wine.

Finally, Article 25 declares that the Sacrament is only effectual in a positive way for those who receive them under the right circumstances. *“And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.”* This comes from 1 Corinthians 11:23-34. Here is what Paul says in verses 27-29, *“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and*

*drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

So while the English Reformers certainly wanted people to receive Holy Communion more frequently than once a year, they did not want people to do so irreverently or without adequate spiritual preparation. This is why Cranmer and other Reformers inserted in the Holy Communion service the long “Communion Devotions”—the Invitation to Confession; Confession and Absolution; and the Comfortable Words... all of which we still read today. And although we only hear the Exhortation a few times a year, back in Cranmer's day it was read at every celebration of the Holy Communion. Anyone who comes to a Holy Communion service, and who prays those prayers and receives absolution will be ready to make their communion and receive the Body and Blood of Christ. That is how Dr. Cranmer set it up centuries ago, and it still works well for us today. ✠

## LITURGY: *The Colors of the Christian Year*

**I**t is Trinitytide, so we will be seeing green on altar and on the celebrant pretty much every Sunday until Advent. What are the different colors of the ecclesiastical year and what do they mean?

**White:** The color of purity and joy is used on the feasts of Our Lord (Christmas, Easter, Epiphany, Ascension, Transfiguration, etc.) and of saints who were not martyrs. It is used for the Sacraments of Holy Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Matrimony.

**Red:** The color of fire and blood is used during Whitsun Week (Pentecost), Feasts of the Holy Cross, and Feasts of Martyrs. It is also used for Ordinations and as an alternative to white for the sacraments (e.g. Confirmation).

**Violet:** The color of humility and penance is used during Advent, Pre-Lent, Lent, Rogation Days, Ember Days, and Vigils of certain feasts. It also may be used whenever black vestments are appointed, and if the parish does not have a black set.

**Green:** The color of life, nature, and growth is used on all occasions when another color is not prescribed or specified. We see it during Epiphany

season (after the Octave has ended) and in from the First Sunday after Trinity to the Sunday next before Advent.

**Black:** The color of death and mourning is used on Good Friday, All Souls' Day, and at burials and Requiem Masses (Masses for the Dead).

### **Other Colors:**

Blue is an English alternative to violet for use during Advent.

Gold may be used as an alternative to white on the highest feast days, specifically Christmas and Easter.

Rose is used on the Third Sunday in Advent and the Fourth Sunday in Lent as a way to lighten the otherwise penitential mood of those seasons.

Tapestry is not a color, but rather a fabric that contains all of the colors. Therefore it may be used any time of the year in any season. There are many different types of tapestry available. ✠

## PARISH NEWS &amp; UPDATES:

**Building Project Update**

We are ready to start fundraising for our building project! Phase 1A—which covers the storm water management and half of our new parking—comes in at \$168,000.00. It includes making a stone construction entrance, silt fence and filler logs, inlet protection, temporary and permanent stabilization, mass grading, parking lot, grading for sidewalks/curbing, backfill, micro bio-retention facility #1, storm water retention facility, piping, drains, landscaping, and more. Check out the display in the parish hall for visuals and the complete list of work. All of this information will be e-mailed to the church very soon, and we will also have some large diagrams up that show 'before and after' views of the project. We are counting on you for your support! Please give as generously as you are able to help us secure our church and grounds for ourselves and for generations to come. The vestry has set aside \$18,000 in seed money for Phase 1A, so the actual amount that we need to raise is only \$150,000.

**Our Beautiful New Oriental Rug**

Special thanks to Ms. Vicki d'Angelo of Baltimore for donating the gorgeous oriental rug for the seating area in the parish hall. It looks great! She also donated magnificent oriental rug in the office a few years ago.

**Our Beautiful New Grandfather Clock**

Special thanks to Dani Rice for arranging us to take possession of her late father's grandfather clock. The beautiful timepiece, once owned by the Rev'd Ernest Parker, a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, was in need of a new home as its owners were relocating out of state and the clock would not fit the decor of the new house. The stately clock has three rings: Westminster, Whittington, and St. Michael. These "ring tones" (to use a contemporary term) come from historic Anglican parishes.

Westminster Chimes — The world's most famous chimes are the Westminster. Nearly everyone associates the Westminster chimes with the Victoria Clock Tower of the House of Parliament in London. Originally, however, they were fitted to the clock of the University Church, St. Mary's the Great, in Cambridge, England. The words to this beautiful chime come from Handel's oratorio *Messiah*: "I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH" and could be our daily prayer: "Lord through

this hour, Be thou our guide. So, by Thy power, No foot shall slide."

Whittington Chimes — The famous Whittington chime is derived from the Church of St. Mary's le Bow, in Cheapside, London. The legend is that Dick Whittington, running away from ill treatment as a house waif, seemed to hear the chimes say, "Turn again Whittington, Lord Mayor of London Town." Dick turned back to eventually serve three terms as London's Lord Mayor.

St. Michael Chimes — Perhaps the St. Michael Chimes have more significance to the United States than elsewhere since their history is really a part of our heritage. The bells were cast in London and installed in St. Michael Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 1764. When the British took over the city during the Revolutionary War, the bells were taken back to England. A Charleston merchant bought them in England and shipped them home to America. In 1823, cracks were found in some of the bells and they were returned to London once again, where the original molds still stood. In February 1867, the bells were once again installed in St. Michael Steeple, and on March 21st joyously rang out, "Home again, home again from a foreign land."

*Courtesy of E & C Clock Repair, Florida USA*

**Social Media**

Check us out on social media on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter! There are announcements and other important bits of information about us posted on these platforms on a regular basis.

**Thank You For Your Support**

"The minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are still in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, and, when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and other charitable uses." (BCP, p. 320) ✠