Some Thoughts on Priests and People of God

In life there are many milestones great and small. The truly great milestones are marked in the Sacramental life of the Church with Baptisms, Confirmations and Communion which we particularly focus on in Easter-tide. Throughout the year, too, we mark these Sacraments as well as Matrimony, Penance, Unction and Holy Orders. These Sacraments and the moments in which they occur are like breathing to the Anglican Christian, and to those brothers and sisters in the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic branches of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

In June, I mark a personal Sacramental milestone as I complete my fifteenth year in Holy Orders. I have spent more than six of these years here at St. Alban’s; and this April I will become the parish’s longest serving priest.

Just in the last year, events are coming to pass concerning unity in the Continuing Church movement that I am certain that all have prayed for, namely the commitment to Sacramental Communion amongst the Anglican Catholic Church, the Anglican Church in America, the Anglican Province in America and the Diocese of the Holy Cross. Already, these bodies have agreed to mutual recognition of Holy Orders amongst clergy, creating a larger body of men available to serve the people of God. Finally, a recent clergy retreat in Montpelier with our bishop has shown a diocesan clergy ready to face the blessings and challenges ahead of us in unity and charity.

With these events in mind and as Good Shepherd Sunday approaches on April 10th (Easter II), I thought it a good time to take stock of where we have been together and where God may be leading us as part of the Anglican Catholic Church and as a community. I thought that I might address this in the context of the role of priest, a Holy Order that involves the three-fold offices of teaching (prophet), sanctifying (priest) and governing (king).4

It lies to the priest to act in persona Christi, in the person of Christ, and to bear the duty of representing the Lord, especially in the exercise of these three offices. The priest represents Christ. But what does “representing” mean in this sense? In regular language it usually means being delegated by someone to be present in his place, to speak and act in his stead because the person he represents is absent from the practical action. Yet, in the Church Christ is never absent, the Church is his living Body and he is the Head of the
Church, present and active within her. Christ is present in a way that is “outside” through the event of the Resurrection that we contemplate in a special way in this Easter Season.

So, the priest, who acts in persona Christi and representing the Lord, never acts in the name of someone who is absent. Rather, he really acts by, with and in Christ today to bring about what the priest would be incapable of: the consecration of the wine and the bread so that they may really be the Lord’s presence, the absolution of sins. The Lord makes his own action present in the person who carries out these gestures. “It is not me, but thee O Lord.”

The three duties of the priest, which Tradition has identified in the Lord’s different words about mission-teaching, sanctifying and governing-make up effective representation. In fact, they are the three actions of the Risen Christ, the same that he teaches today, in the Church and in the world. Thereby he creates faith, gathers together his people, creates the presence of truth and really builds the communion of the Church; and sanctifies and guides.

The task of teaching is particularly important today when there are numerous contrasting philosophies that come into being and disappear, creating confusion about the fundamental decisions on how to live. We are often confused about the fundamental choices in our life and question what the world is, where it comes from, where we are going, what we must do in order to do good, how we should live and what the truly pertinent values are. Layer in an educational crisis and it seems as if we no longer know from what and for what we have been made and where we are going.

In this context the words of the Lord, who took pity on the throng because the people were like sheep without a shepherd, came true (cf. Mk 6:34). The Lord had noticed this when he saw the thousands of people following him in the desert because, in the diversity of the currents of that time, they no longer knew what the true meaning of Scripture was, what God was saying. The Lord, moved by compassion, interpreted God’s word, he himself is the Word of God, and thus provided an orientation. This is the function in persona Christi of the priest: making present, in the confusion and bewilderment of our times, the light of God’s Word, the light that is Christ himself in this our world.

So, here in the Anglican Catholic Church, the priest does not “wing it”. He does not teach his own ideas, a philosophy that he himself has invented, that he has discovered or likes. The priest teaches in the name of Christ present, he proposes the truth that is Christ himself, his word and his way of living and of moving ahead. What Christ said of himself applies to the priest: “My teaching is not mine” (Jn 7:56). On this topic St Augustine, speaking of priests said: “And as for us, what are we? Ministers (of Christ), his servants; for what we distribute to you is not ours but we take it from his store. And we too live of it, because we are servants like you.”

How is this carried out at St. Alban’s? In the liturgy, the Sunday preaching, the weekday preaching, in catechetical formation, in Sunday school, in the various programs that are offered, in adult studies and in Bible classes. academic institutions and, I personally pray, in the life and work of parish clergy. In fact, no one can choose the priesthood on his own, it certainly is not a means of obtaining security in life or achieving a social position. The priesthood is the response to the Lord’s call, to his will, in order to become a herald of his truth, not a personal truth but of his truth.

In the sanctifying function, the priest brings the Sacramental life to the parish and sets worship in a rich liturgical context that is Common Prayer and Anglican music and hymnody. Nothing is without a theological purpose. To match spiritual needs to teaching and sacramental life, we have a pattern of Sunday worship that has remained unchanged for more than six years. We strike a balance between the contemplative and the Eucharistic celebration that is the source and summit of our life. To these we have added daily sung morning prayer, and other devotions within the Anglican Catholic tradition that enrich various members of the body of Christ. The wide range of opportunities for participation in the sanctified life makes St. Alban’s a wonderful and prayerful place.

None of this occurs, nor can it occur, in a vacuum. Each of us has his or her own special role within the Church, for the building up of the Church, through the exercise of the threefold offices of Jesus Christ: Priest, Prophet, and King. Bishops, with priests and deacons, authoritatively teach faith and morals, proclaim and preach the Word, and preserve the Apostolic faith with the authority of Christ. The bishop, with his priests, are the stewards of the Eucharist, and the other sacraments for the sanctification of the laity and themselves. The bishop exercises a proper, ordinary, and immediate authority over his diocese. The priests and deacons exercise governance in union with their bishop. This expresses the unity and catholicity of the Church.

The sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and holy
orders imprint a permanent mark/character upon our souls that grants us a share in the threefold offices of Jesus Christ: Priest, Prophet, and King. This sacramental character is given us, as the sacraments which are the action of Christ in word and work, by Christ Jesus himself, so that we may ever grow in his likeness stamped by a seal that opens us to his grace.

Sacraments of Initiation
- Baptism
- Confirmation
- Eucharist

Sacraments of Healing
- Penance
- Anointing of the Sick

Sacraments of Commitment
- Marriage
- Holy Orders

The sacrament of baptism configures us to Christ and deputes us to right worship. Sharing in the priesthood of Christ as baptized Christians, we offer prayer and penance for ourselves and for the Church that they may be sanctified. We also have a character, which unites us with the Paschal Mystery of Christ, and which is renewed and deepened by our capacity to unite ourselves sacramentally with the death and resurrection of Christ at Holy Communion. This character is a seal that marks us with the spiritual character of the cross and resurrection, by which we are saved. Baptism also grants us a share in Christ’s prophetic and kingly ministry. This is lived by our teaching of the faith, especially as catechists and Sunday school teachers, proclamation of the Word of God, service to the Church, especially liturgical (lay readers, acolytes, choir, altar guild), and by the witness we offer through a holy life and practical charity.

Incorporated into the Church by baptism and given the foundational character needed for anyone to exercise the Christian vocation, the sacrament of confirmation acts as a capstone upon baptism, the way Pentecost is the capstone upon Easter. By the sacrament of Confirmation we are more perfectly bound to the Church and are endowed with the special strength of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. As true witnesses of Christ, we are more strictly obliged to spread the faith by word and deed.

Confirmation strengthens our capacity to live the sacramental character already received at baptism to exercise the threefold offices by the reception of the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and holy fear of the Lord. Confirmation gives us the strength and power of the Holy Ghost, who was sent by the Father and the Son, and subsequently sends us to be missionaries of Christ, making God the Father known throughout the whole world.

All the faithful have the duty to teach and defend the faith, and to lead others to it by prayer and holy witness. This requires, in turn, a constant study of the faith and a desire to share it. The laity, in union with their priests (shepherds), exercise governance and authority to build up the Church of Christ. This may involve roles in the “temporalities” such as serving on vestry, managing the financial gifts of the people (stewardship) and simple work on the building and grounds. In the priestly function, regular attendance at Sunday services and the days of obligation are a minimum obligation. Involvement in feast and saints days and the liturgical life of the parish as readers, acolytes, singers and musicians grace the altar of God and constitute an active share in the priestly office.

By exercising their gifts, by learning, through teaching and evangelism, through charity and outreach, the people of this parish sanctify the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Clergy and people together—the Body of Christ—in this place will continue to pray and serve, love and learn, and press on the Kingdom of God in all joy and in all peace.

With Eastertide blessings,
Canon Nalls

For many years George and Jean Lampley have decorated the bulletin boards at St. Albans in the hall and in the parish hall. They said, “It has been a lot of fun changing for the seasons, especially Christmas. But, time passes on and it is time for someone else to decorate with new and fresh ideas.”

We thank George and Jean for their years of devotion to our parish and the many projects they have built and accomplished for the good of the church. Who will carry on this particular activity? Just pick a board and do something!
Wednesday Adult Study and Mass

For many years, St. Alban’s has had a Wednesday morning Bible study beginning at 10:30 am followed by a Mass and healing service at noon. The course has been taught by our longtime parishioner and lay Scripture teacher Mr. Blair Plunkett. Unfortunately, Blair’s health has prevented his continuing on with the course. (Please keep Blair in your prayers as he continues to recover from a period of serious illness.)

We plan to resume the study on Wednesday, April 27th. We have had a number of suggestions for topics and Scripture to be included in the class. If there is something you would like to see included, please e-mail the rector at stirenae.us@hotmail.com or ring the church office at 804-262-6100 to let us know.

Men’s Prayer Breakfast

There has been an expression of interest in having a monthly men’s prayer breakfast and fellowship on a monthly basis. These would take place on the first Saturday of the month at 8:30 am and could include a short talk or study, or a work project here in the parish. It has been suggested that the group might also meet at one of several local places such as Aunt Sarah’s for a “change of venue” (and no cleaning up afterward!). If you have an interest, please contact Canon Nalls

Church History Study

We are hoping to offer a Christian history study over a period of 12 weeks. We can undertake the study as part of the regular Sunday class or on Saturday evenings. The course uses the well respected “Christian History Made Easy” series by Dr. Timothy Paul Jones. The course is geared for young adults to adults to have as much participation as possible, and will cover:

- The real-life stories of people such as St. Patrick, Martin Luther, and Augustine
- People who changed history: Constantine, Charlemagne, and Francis of Assisi
- How we got the Bible that we read today — John Wycliffe, William Tyndale and others
- The Middle Ages and the Reformation: Kings and Queens, Monks and Reformers
- Where church doctrines and practices originated
- How the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches came to be
- Reason and Revival - How modernity and the scientific revolution affected Christianity

How Christianity has spread around the world

The 12 Session Overview

SESSION ONE: The First Christians, AD 1–100
Nero; the Persecution of Early Christians; and the Fall of Jerusalem

SESSION TWO: Defending the Truth, AD 100–300
Four Heresies within the Early Church; Jesus’ Divinity; and the Bible’s Authenticity

SESSION THREE: From Persecuted to Preferred, AD 300–500
Constantine; the Legalization of Christianity; and the Council of Nicaea

SESSION FOUR: Christianity on the Move, AD 300–500
Gregory of Nazianzus; Fall of the Roman Empire; and Augustine

SESSION FIVE: A Church Divided, AD 500–1300
Roman Church vs. Eastern Church; Charlemagne; and the Crusades

SESSION SIX: God’s Work Goes On, AD 500–1300
Boniface; St. Francis of Assisi; and Thomas Aquinas

SESSION SEVEN: Everything Falls Apart, AD 1300–1500
Hundred Years’ War; Bubonic Plague; and John Wycliffe

SESSION EIGHT: The Reformation, AD 1500–1600
Martin Luther; John Calvin; and William Tyndale

SESSION NINE: Post-Reformation Growing Pains, AD 1600–1700
Arminianism vs. Calvinism; Puritans; John Bunyan; and William Wilberforce

SESSION TEN: Revolutions in the New World, AD 1600–1700
Pilgrims; Deism; John Wesley; Jonathan Edwards; George Whitefield; and The Great Awakening

SESSION ELEVEN: Ageless Faith in an Age of Reason, AD 1700–1900
The Enlightenment; William Carey; D. L. Moody; and Charles Spurgeon

SESSION TWELVE: A Global Gospel, AD 1900–Present
Pentecostalism; Liberalism vs. Fundamentalism; Dietrich Bonhoeffer; and Billy Graham

There would be a modest charge of $10 for the Participant’s Guide, and we’d like to advertise it throughout the community as a means of outreach. Please let the rector know if you would like to assist with and/or take the course, and what your preferences are as to times and days.
Acts of Apostles-Bible Study

A new Sunday Bible study on the Acts of the Apostles will begin on the Second Sunday in Easter, April 10th at 9:30 am.


In Part I which is the Gospel, St. Luke presented Jesus' mission to establish the Kingdom of God in bringing salvation to the "lost sheep of Israel" and to mankind in general.

In Part II St. Luke covers the Church's development from the Ascension of Christ to St. Paul's journey to Rome as a prisoner. He presents the compelling story of how Jesus's Apostles and disciples carried forward the mission of the universal Kingdom under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The course is “modular” and can be attended in whole or parts. If you need to miss a class, the handouts can keep you up to date. The course is designed to take 12 weeks, but may be adjusted according to our progress and circumstances.

Requirements: Please bring a Bible, your handout for the lesson, and note-taking materials. As well, participants should have read the Scripture text for the Lesson.

Outline of Acts of Apostles:
II. St. Peter’s Leadership and the Church’s Mission in Jerusalem (Acts 2:14-8:3)
III. The Church’s Mission in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:4-9:43)

Lesson Number  Chapter  Description
Lesson 1  1:1-2:13  Prologue and The Preparation for the Church's Mission
Lesson 2  2:13-3:26  The Church's Mission in Jerusalem
Lesson 3  4 - 6  The Church's Mission in Jerusalem Continued: Teaching at the Temple and Persecution
Lesson 4  7 - 8  The Church's Mission in Jerusalem and the Church's Mission in Judea and Samaria
Lesson 5  9 - 12  The Church's Mission in Judea and Samaria and the Introduction of the Gospel to the Gentiles
Lesson 6  13 - 14  The Church's Mission to the Gentiles Saints Barnabas and Paul's First Missionary Journey
Lesson 8  17 - 18  The Church's Continuing Mission to the Gentiles: The Completion of St. Paul's Second Missionary Journey and the Beginning of the Third
Lesson 9  19 - 20  The Church's Continuing Mission to the Gentiles: St. Paul's Third Missionary Journey
Lesson 10  20 - 21  The Church's Mission to the Gentiles Completed: St. Paul's Ordeal in Jerusalem
Lesson 11  23 - 25  St. Paul a Prisoner
Lesson 12  26 - 28  St. Paul's Journey to Rome
March 2016

The Vestry is thankful for faithful tithing. A number of 2016 tithes statements and commitments to the Emergency Building Fund Reserve have been received and other submissions are strongly encouraged.

Year 2016 General Offerings are $454 above budget, Operating income apart from restricted Building Fund Reserve is at budget. Building Fund Reserve outstanding pledges are $2,500. Restricted fund balances support Food Bank operations only through April - monthly budgeted needs are $150- minimal contributions have been received this year. "Memorial or In Honor of" Pew Naming is also solicited at $250 to support the special events budget.

Total expenses year-to-date are $578 below budget. Utility costs are $758 below budget. Custodial costs due to special cleaning is $508 above budget. Major approved maintenance remains deferred pending achievement of the Building Fund Reserve goal.

As of March 31, 2016 cash-on-hand was $18,868, of which $6,453 is restricted- (includes Building Fund Reserve for emergency major maintenance of $5,950). The mortgage balance is $81,365 and regular monthly payments remain effected as scheduled.

Vestry Notes

Vestry reviewed the Building Fund Reserve for major unfunded emergency maintenance projects and deferred action on the projects. The initial needs target is $10,000. With cash balances and current pledges, a minimum cash and pledge shortfall of $4,050 exists.

The Rector appointed Mr. Edward Darby as Senior Warden and John Hekman as Junior Warden,

Ms. Carlene Thompson resigned from the Vestry due to an impending relocation to Florida. The Vestry and Parishioners wish Carlene and Richard "fair winds and following seas" and thanked Carlene for her work on the Vestry. Joe Robertson has agreed to serve on the Vestry to fill in for Carlene through the end of this year. At the next meeting the vestry will vote to install him immediately everyone is in agreement.

The Diocese announced that the Diocesan Synod will be conducted June 9 and June 10 at St. Alban's Anglican Catholic Church. It is the intent that all Synod proceedings will be conducted at the Parish. Further information will be forthcoming on volunteer opportunities. The meal preparation will be catered and meal service & drinks will be provided by the Parish.

New Website for St. Alban’s –

Spread the Word

We have revamped the Church website. It can be found at the same address as before – www.SaintAlbansACC.org.

Our aspiration is to keep the website up to date with upcoming service times and special events.

The next five events or services are listed on the top page of the website. All upcoming events can be seen on the “Events Calendar” page.

On the “Events Calendar” page, you can click on the name of a service or event to get more details. Also, in the upper right-hand corner of that page, you can view upcoming events as a list rather than in calendar view by clicking on the button that states “View as Month” and changing to list format.

We also hope to post the current copy of The Verger on the website every month.

Please remember that we also stay in touch through our Church’s Twitter and Facebook accounts. You can find them linked on the Church website. Or you can find them directly here:

www.Facebook.com/StAlbansACC
www.Twitter.com/StAlbansACC

Please help spread the word about Saint Alban’s by referring friends to our website, and by liking the Saint Alban’s Facebook account, by liking our Facebooks posts, and by re-tweeting its tweets. It’s electronic evangelism!

If you have any questions or concerns about the Church website, or its Facebook or Twitter accounts, or if you want to get out notice about a Church event, please feel free to contact John Farmer, who handles that stuff. You can reach him at JFarmer@LeadingEdgeLaw.com or by phone at 804.343.3221.
Anglican Music Festival at St. Alban’s
Alleluia Saturday, April 2, 2016

More than 80 people from all over the Mid-Atlantic diocese assembled on April 2 at St. Alban’s for the Anglican Music Festival led by Bernard Riley. The event began with breakfast at 8 a.m. Then there was instruction and rehearsal which was followed by Matins officiated by Canon Nalls. At 10:45, there was a tea break followed by more rehearsal and instruction. A Solemn Eucharist was performed, with Bishop Larow as the celebrant, at noon. It was followed with a lavish lunch at 1:15. Then came more instruction and rehearsal for an evensong service at 3 p.m. officiated by Father Johnson. Adjournment occurred around 4:30. It was a busy and instructive day designed to help priests and lay people become more familiar with the Anglican service as it is related to the traditional music of the services.

Many who attended came from small parishes that are unable to provide the full extent of the musical requirements of the Anglican service in their home churches, but they eagerly participated and learned. The event was free but an offering was collected at the noon Eucharist.

It was a day of feasting as well as singing. Many were responsible for preparing and serving the food led by Bev Bouse. Working with Bev on the day of the event to serve the food were Pat Hancock, Kathy Farmer, JoAnn Witt, Elizabeth Nalls and others. Food preparation was also an inhouse project with Elizabeth Nalls, Elaine Wittel, Holly Brinton and Hilda Braswell among those who helped in the preparation. Apologies to anyone who was overlooked in mentioning.

Bishop Larow as the cosponsor of the festival. There were 2 bishops (Larow and McLean) and 12 priests from the diocese in attendance.

Others participating beside the singers were the recorder players Braxton, Richard, Jackie, Debra and Judy, trumpeter Caitlin, violinist David and organists Charlotte and Mr. Riley. Caitlin and Kaleigh performed as cantors. David Wheeler conducted.

A special addition was the hand crafted portative, a potable pipe organ, brought from Newport News by Ron Tindall, the maker of the organ.

Bernard Riley is asking all those who contributed food or other items to give him the amount spent so that he and the bishop can determine a budget for future similar occasions like this. It would only involve the expense of supplies not the labor for the product.

The overall effect of the festival was that those attending left exhilarated from the experience of performing three basic services the Anglican way, and were well fed both mentally and physically.

See pictures from the festival on the following pages.

Spring Plant Sale

On May 7 St. Alban’s will be holding a fundraiser—plant sale from 9 a.m. to noon. This year we plan to include other garden items like statuary and garden tools. This date corresponds with the Lewis Ginter Plant Sale so we hope to have interested buyers who may drive by to stop in.

We ask that you help in our efforts by donating some plants from your garden that you have separated during your cleaning up for spring. Any varieties are most welcome. For more information, please call 262-1093.
## April 2015

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<tr>
<td><strong>SUNDAY SERVICES</strong></td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
<td><em>Hospitality assignment</em></td>
<td>8:30 am Morning Prayer</td>
<td>9:30 Adult Study</td>
<td>11:00 am Holy Eucharist-Sung Service</td>
<td>6:00 pm Evensong</td>
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<td>EASTER I</td>
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<td>ANNUNCIATION Morning Prayer 8am</td>
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<td>EASTER IV</td>
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### April Birthdays
- Deane Bailey 03
- Sally Bingley 08
- Benton Marder 10
- Edward Alleyne 12
- Avril Lim 12
- Jo Ann Witt 29
- Mary Ann Nash 29

### *Hospitality Assignments*

The following groups are assigned for coffee hours.
- April 3- Altar Guild/Ladies
- April 10- Ushers/Lay readers
- April 17- Parish/Vestry
- April 24- Men/Choir
St. Alban’s is a traditional Anglican parish located in Richmond, Virginia. St. Alban’s is committed to Christianity as a way of life. Faithfulness to the ancient faith, reverence in worship, love for God and each other and holiness in life are the hallmarks of the parish. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to become a part of our growing parish family! We will embrace you, pray for you, and encourage you as we strive together to attain the kingdom of heaven.

**BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SUNDAY**

Every Sunday is "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday. Let’s each try to remember to invite our friends to share our parish’s life in Christ.

**Worship Schedule**

- **Sundays**
  - Sunday 8:30am - 9:30am Holy Eucharist (1st and 3rd, 5th)-Morning Prayer (2nd and 4th)
  - Sunday 9:30am - 10:30pm Adult Study and Sunday School
  - Sunday 11:00 am-12 Noon Holy Eucharist (music)
  - Sunday 6:00pm - 7:00pm Choral Evensong
- **Wednesdays**
  - Wednesday 12:00 Noon-12:45 Holy Eucharist and Healing Service
- **Daily**
  - Monday-Saturday 8:00am-8:25am Matins (Chanted Morning Prayer)
- **Holy Days**

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Follow us on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/StAlbansACC](https://twitter.com/StAlbansACC)

**St. Alban’s Anglican Parish**

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