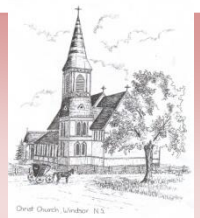


Christ Church Chronicles

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Rector's Ramblings

"Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed!" This is the ancient Christian greeting. A proclamation, and one that captures something of the joy and the power of the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection, this greeting symbolizes so much of what belongs to the inner core of the Christian faith.



"What mean ye by this service?" This was the question which framed our Holy Week reflections. A phrase from the ancient story of the Jewish Passover in *The Book of Exodus*, it takes on a new meaning with the reality of Christ's passion, death and resurrection.

The ancient liberation of

Israel from their Egyptian oppressors was really about something more than matters social and political. The contest in *The Book of Exodus* is between two opposing principles: various divine powers in the natural world versus the transcendent power of the One God who rules over all nature. And over human hearts as well. Pharaoh's heart was hardened, *on the one hand*, and God hardened Pharaoh's heart, *on the other hand*. This ambiguity conveys a great meaning and one that is really only fully overcome in the Passion of Christ. "*Christ is our Passover*," the Passover lamb. God in Christ *wills* to suffer for us. "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" This was the message of Holy Week. And yet, its fuller meaning and truth is found in the proclamation of Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Death has died. Death has been changed. But have we?

For that is the question. We hear the proclamation (or do we?). We celebrate the wonder of the spring of nature's year. But do we really understand the greater spring of the Resurrection of our souls and bodies?

"What mean ye by this service?" The question is not just about Holy Week. It is about the whole of our lives in faith. It is about the great and wondrous Christian proclamation of the Resurrection.

"What mean ye by this service?" What service? The constant "*sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving*" is the Church's actual response to Christ's Resurrection. Our liturgy is about our participation in Christ's Redemptive Sacrifice for us and for the whole world. It carries over into our lives with one another.

There can be no Easter without Good Friday. And surely, it is in the three great holy days, the *triduum sacrum* of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday that we learn precisely about the service and sacrifice of Christ. And the joy that it brings, namely, Easter.

Sorrow and loss are changed into the marvel and miracle of grace and joy. Wonderfully, there is a transformation, a change, a change for the better, a change *from misery into felicity*. In short, there is a new way of looking at ourselves that is nothing less than a new way of looking at, well, absolutely everything!

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God," as the poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, puts it. And, indeed, it is but how much more so because of Christ's Resurrection from the dead which signals the redemption of the whole of the created order? Prayer and worship are the means of our participation in the cosmic dimension of the story of human redemption.

Confirmation



It was a joy to see such a fine collection of young people confirmed at Christ Church on Sunday, April 3rd, by the Suffragan Bishop, the Rt. Rev'd R. Cutler. It was the Bishop's first visit to the Parish.

I have sometimes been asked: what do we need Bishops for? The short answer is Confirmation. The matters of Ordination and Confirmation are the two specifically spiritual functions of bishops. The term "*suffragan*" is more about the administrative side of the Episcopal office. A suffragan bishop is an assistant bishop who does not have the right of succession to become a Diocesan Bishop. So what is confirmation?

It is the laying on of hands with prayer upon those who are baptized and who have reached a certain level of maturity. The candidates are

old enough to be able to understand for themselves the basic principles of the Christian Faith and to take full responsibility for themselves with respect to spiritual life. They are able, for instance, to appreciate what a Sacrament is and to know that Holy Communion is not ordinary bread and wine. It is the body and blood of Christ.

The older pattern in our Parishes, in a less mobile age, was for children to be baptized as wee infants, followed by confirmation as young 'teenagers', and, then, finally, to be admitted to Communion. Confirmation, however, is not simply a meal ticket to Communion. It is a service which has an integrity in itself. It is about people seeking God's very great and strengthening grace, which is conveyed through the Office of the Bishop, in order to walk with Christ in the journey of faith.

The newly confirmed are:

Kate Jürgens, Claire Jürgens, Skye MacLeod, Kate Burgess, Lucy Burgess, Liam Kelley, Patrick Kelley, Aiden Kelley, Brittany Balding, Meagan Balding & Eric Dufour.

A fine group of young theologues (students of theology), it was splendid to see them confirmed at Christ Church.

Congratulations!

On Saturday, April 16th, 2011, *Ruby Dykens*, the great-grandmother of the Kelley boys who were confirmed on April 3rd, celebrated her 90th birthday. Our very best wishes and prayers go out to her and her family.

Just before Easter, the Parish launched a new initiative, a strategy for communication and outreach. A letter from me was sent out to those on the Parish mailing list and, then, a flyer has been circulated in Windsor and beyond. It is all part and parcel of our parish mission to the community in which we are placed.

In a way, such things are really about death and resurrection, the very teachings which guide, govern and direct our lives in the Christian view. In the Easter season, Jesus runs out after us to teach us about his victory over our sin and death. We have only to live his Easter triumph, living in the power of his risen life. Such is the life of prayer and praise, the life of worship and service. It is our life, if we will embrace it, here at Christ Church.

Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen, indeed!

Fr. David Curry

