



February 1987 29

For the Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany -- 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23

God's Dwelling Place

I wonder if there has ever been a time when humankind did not ponder the whereabouts of God. At least as far as the written accounts of history go, people have sought God in every imaginable way and in every imaginable place. There have been those who looked for God in the planets which hovered overhead, in the sounds that resonated in their ears, and in the growing things that surrounded their lives. In the years before Jesus, the years of the ancient Jews, people often placed God in identifiable, real places. God *lived* on a mountain top; God lived in a gold encrusted wooden chest; God lived in the heart of the Temple.

In the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul offers an alternative dwelling place for God. He says that we are the temple of God, and that God lives in us. As Christians, we can look at Paul's words from at least two viewpoints. Paul is telling us that we as individuals are the temple of God, and that God dwells in each of us. This concept of God living internally in each person was probably quite controversial to those early Christians. Some find it controversial to-day. Some want an external God, who exists apart and away from us. I believe that Paul was trying to urge the Corinthians to look inside, to find God closer to home, to realize that God is *a part of* us, not *apart from* us.

On the other hand, Paul is saying that we collectively, are the temple of God; that as Christians we make up the Body of Christ, the temple of the Living God. By joining together, Christians as a group become the dwelling place of God. It seems to affirm Jesus' words of assurance that he will be present whenever two or three are gathered

together in his Name. I believe that Paul fully understood the necessity of Christians banding together to build the Kingdom, by first building the temple wherein God could live -- a temple not built with human hands, but made of human lives.

We can take a third point of view -- a combination of the two previous. We can see Paul's comments as a double edged razor, cutting to the heart of the matter, clarifying and simplifying the difficulties of understanding *where* God lives. What a wonderful way to see the omniscience, the omnipotence, the omnipresence of God. How comforting to know that wherever we are, God is truly with us, and that we as individuals can, in concert with other Christians, build the temple of God, stone on stone from the foundation that lies within each one of us.

I remember singing as a child the old hymn, *He Lives*. If I recall correctly, the chorus goes like this

He lives, he lives, Christ Jesus lives today.
He walks with me and he talks with me,
Along life's narrow way.
He lives, he lives, salvation to impart.
You ask me how I know he lives?
He lives within my heart.

These old lyrics take on new meaning in the light of Paul's words to the Corinthians. *

Novice Br. George Keith is a member of the parish of Calvary/St. George's, New York City. He writes for the theater and is a lecturer and preacher. He is employed by the Church Hymnal Corporation as editor of the biographical directories of the Episcopal Church.

Founder's Forum

Here Comes the Judge

We live in a very judgmental world. Criticism abounds in many forms -- I myself am guilty of it . It is a simple fact of life that we mere humans are critical of what others do -- we sometimes just don't know when to shut up! In fact there were several incidents in Jesus' life which caused him to speak out against criticism of others.

Jesus wants us to see the comedy in our criticism of others. Jesus wants us to understand that our attempts to judge others

will bring judgment upon ourselves. Others in turn will judge us. We will unwittingly judge ourselves. We will find it difficult to escape the judgment of God.

Jesus gives us keys to overcoming our judgment: we are to help others; only when we keep in mind our own faults can we help others. In helping others we help ourselves.

And finally, judgment must be replaced by love. Temptation to judge is all around us. Replace judgment with love . O RTB

Here and there with the Brotherhood .. .

COMMUNITY NOTES

BOSTON MA: Br. Donovan Aidan Bowley attended diocesan convention as one of the delegates from his parish, the Church of the Advent . He was joined by Br. Laurence Andrew Keller , Provincial of Province I , and novice Br . Matthew Staples, for the investiture of the Rt. Rev. David Johnson as Bishop of Massachusetts, which took place during the convention. This service concluded with a vigil for peace on the Common opposite the cathedral, sponsored by Bishop Johnson and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship .

NEW YORK NY: Superior General Richard Thomas Biernacki was joined by Brs. James E. Teets, William Francis Jones, Stephen Storen, Tobias Stanislas Haller , and William Bunting for the installation of Br. Stephen-Paul as Superior of the Order of the Incarnation. The service took place in St. James' Chapel of the cathedral. The Rt . Rev. Paul Moore , Jr . , Visitor to the Brotherhood and several other religious communities who were also represented at the service, has taken this new order under his care and oversight. During his sermon he referred to the need for flexibility in the religious life , and at the Peace greeted the BSG contingent as the original flexible friars"! We ask your prayers for the Order of the Incarnation, which is devoted to works of compassion, including ministry to people with A.I.D.S . +++ Br. John Peter Clark attended the Duke Ellington Sacred Concert, which was held in honor of the Rt . Rev. Horace W. B. Donegan, XII Bishop of New York , and Visitor Emeritus of the Brotherhood .

BRONX NY: Br. Jason Jude Schellas and his wife Sinai visited his former parish, St . Andrew's, Castle Hill, for the harvest festival. Brs. William and Earl Christian still serve at St . Andrew's, and joined the congregation in greeting Br. Jason Jude on this happy occasion. +++ Br . William continues his writing ministry, corresponding with the elderly and house bound. He has been sending them letters for many years.

YONKERS NY: Br . Tobias Stanislas was a guest musician and singer with the choir of St . Paul's Church, joining Br. Anthony Francis Tornabene in the bass section and playing recorder accompaniment for the Advent lessons and carols service .

WHITE PLAINS NY: At the November meeting of the Brotherhood's Council, the Brotherhood Grant program was inaugurated. This program had been established by Chapter in 1984, under the following terms: that beginning with General Chapter 1986, the Council would, at its quarterly meetings , - decide upon a grant recipient to receive a tithe of the community's income from that quarter . This is an affirmation of the tithe as a universal principle for all in the Church — not only for the laity in the pews, but for parishes and organizations, for clergy and religious communities -- as a witness to the Body of Christ as a sharing community. The first grant will go to the Joseph Richey House, Baltimore, a hospice for those who have no one to care for them.

SUFFERN NY: Br . John Francis Jones gave personal testimony on Alcohol Awareness Sun-

day at Christ Church of Ramapo. Companion Maryellen Jones gave an address on "Faith and Our Relationship with God" as part of the service in early Advent. Together they teamed up to do a Christian education presentation on the various customs which have grown up around the observance of Advent the wreath, the Jesse tree, the Advent Calendar , and the visit from the Bishop of Myra, Nicholas . Maryellen is now involved in fund raising for the parish Christian Day Care Center , scheduled to open in September of this year . The vestry of Christ Church has approved the center , which is to have a sliding fee schedule.

MILFORD PA: Br . Anthony Francis and his wife, Susan, are beginning a new venture. They have bought a small gift shop , and will be moving to Milford from Yonkers. They have both prayed long and hard about this decision, and believe this giant step is grounded in faith, and that Milford is where they belong. They hope that this family style store can preserve a bit of the old-fashioned hominess of a small town, and the ministry of caring on a one-to-one basis.

HARTLETON PA: Br. Thaddeus David Williams filled in for the manager at Hartley House, a personal care boarding home, on Thanksgiving Day.

WASHINGTON DC: Br. Richard Thomas was deputy registrar for the ordination and consecration of the Rt. Rev . Ronald Hayward Haines, as Suffragan Bishop of Washington.

Br . Thomas Martin Little also attended.

CATONSVILLE MD: Brs. John E. Nidecker and Edward Munro joined the Rev . Karl Halter for a visit with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor .

FT. BELVOIR VA: Br. Thomas Martin is working with the area shelter for the home-less, which is staffed by local churches.

PORTLAND OR Br . Kevin James Jensen is taking Spanish lessons in preparation for further work in the Hispanic ministry of St . David's, Sandy OR.

CINCINNATI 011 Br . Thomas Joseph Ross is recovering from a stomach virus that struck during his trip to the Brotherhood Council meeting in New York . He reports that he is feeling much better, however, as he put it, "The flight home was memorable."

OSHKOSH WI: Novice Br . Randal Anthony Elliott took part in a recent Cursillo in his diocese . He also took part in two joint Vesper Services held by his parish, Trinity, and the local Roman Catholic parish, St. Peter's. He was joined by Companion Mary Gengler at these services.

HARRISBURG IL: Novice Br . Michael David Elvestrom is preparing a religious art show he plans to take on tour in the Midwest . He has also submitted preliminary sketches for the restoration of All Saints Parish, Chicago. The intent is to restore the land-mark building to its Victorian glory. Postulant (the Rev.) Edward Ramon Riley is rector of the parish. □

A Good News Follow-Up to "An Afternoon in Trenton" (The Servant #103, October 1986)

Proclaiming Release

by Marcy Darin

Laughing softly , he twirled the navy blue T-shirt above his head to the cheers of family and friends who had gathered to celebrate the beginning of a new life. The T-shirt , a gift from the congregation, was emblazoned with the words, "Nate is Great."

After spending more than ten years behind bars for a crime he did not commit, Nate Walker is a free man. Within the past month, his story has been told and retold in a flurry of headlines and television appearances: in 1974, this black. construction worker had been sentenced to life-plus-fifty years for kidnapping and raping a white

woman . Nate's long ordeal ended in November , when a self-styled minister sleuth, James McCloskey of Centurion Ministries, discovered that a sample of the victim's fluids taken after the crime had never been analyzed.

When the FBI report revealed a blood type that did not match either Walker or the victim, Nate was exonerated.

But the headlines didn't tell the whole story. There is the courage of Irene Walker , who, fortified by her faith in God and the innocence of her son, had begun a campaign to free Nate more than a decade before . Throughout the long years of prayers, neigh-

borhood fund-raisers, and visits to her son in prison, she had turned to relatives, friends, and her church family for support .

It was fitting that Nate's release celebration should take place in the small inner city church whose congregation had helped support Irene and Nate during the last three years of their ordeal. It was from Grace Episcopal Church that Brs. William Francis Jones and Stephen Storen had gone with my husband, the Rev. Glenn Chalmers, and I, to visit Nate in Trenton Prison. And it was here that we had prayed for Nate's release at the Sunday morning eucharists, and had hosted gospel concerts to help pay the legal ex- penses connected with Nate's appeal.



by *Maryellen Jones, C/BSG*

Br . John Francis and I have a joint ministry at Christ Church of Ramapo in Suffern, NY. Our ministry is to the youth of the parish; we are coordinators of the church school (preschool to teens) and are responsible for the Youth Group.

Our church school uses the St. John's Program, an audio visual curriculum developed by Canon Ken Clark of New Mexico. The Youth Group has grown and matured in the time we have been at Christ Church . The teens attend services as acolytes and choir members; they are learning not only the classroom aspects, but the practical aspects of Christianity . Besides field trips, the young people visit the elderly at a local nursing home; they help the guilds and committees of the parish

As we toasted Nate and Irene that Sunday evening, as we thanked God for Nate's release and for the ministry of the man who had helped free Nate, I marveled again at their perseverance and lack of bitterness, bitterness that might have consumed someone else. Nate Walker and his mother had been prisoners of hope , and I thank God for their faith.

As Nate said in between bites of his mother's peach cobbler , "Pm ready for some living now ." □

Marcy Darin is an editor in the Office of Communication at the Episcopal Church Center, and a parishioner at Grace Episcopal Church , Elizabeth NJ.

A Modern Priscilla and Aquila
The Joys of Ministry

in special projects; and they just recently stood in front of a local store ringing bells for the Salvation Army's Christmas drive .

This ministry is a joy and we share in the happiness (of which there is much) and the disappointments (of which there are few). Br . John Francis and I knew when we were dating that we would serve the Lord together . We didn't know how he would have us accomplish it. Little did we know when we were married that John Francis would join the Brotherhood and we would have this wonderful ministry.

Serving the Lord is always a great privilege, but when you can share this service with a person you love , it makes life truly worth living. We will continue to serve the Lord together, with the help of the Brotherhood, until he calls us home to him. □

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