



## THE SERVANT



*On her 90th birthday, her parish celebrated Helen Bernice SSG by dedicating a 90-year-old reed organ in her honor. Ciarán Anthony and Laurie Joseph SSG attended the festivities.*

**# 193**  
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*The Servant*

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## AN ANGEL – UNAWARE!

Many of you know that my work at the Episcopal Church Center involves the chapel there. In addition to preparing the daily rota for Morning Prayer and Eucharist, with the able help of Jean Schwarz, the ordinary tasks of washing and ironing the linens falls to us. But on to other things, such as being taken unaware.

Not long ago, as I entered the lobby of the Center, the Presiding Bishop asked me to assist with a woman in a wheelchair whom he had invited into the chapel. “Lenore” was lucid; she was also not terribly clean. She had many things with her, but really not many if that constituted all worldly goods. She was concerned about not ending up in a shelter because she felt “they” would ask for her passport and she did not have it. I began the process of finding a non-shelter where she might stay. After calling many city agencies to no avail, we decided to place her in a local hotel; this was something which pleased her. All through this I kept wondering “how does someone end up in this situation?”

William Francis, who works in the Anglican UN Office, joined Jean and me, and we got Lenore cleaned up. We got her an Episcopal Church T-Shirt and a nice bag for all her possessions. She wanted me to go with her to an ATM so she could get cash for the cab – she was not about to be wheeled to the hotel in the sun! ATM? If she’s got an ATM card, why am I arranging a hotel room? She explains that her nephew has loaned her his card until hers arrives. I wonder where the bank will deliver that card? So – to the ATM we go and find that to no surprise, there are no funds. Nephew? We did get her to the hotel and that was the last we heard from Lenore.

We are taken in by possessions and property and the control those things have over us, even while we feel we are in control. Even those with few possessions, concentrating their need for control on those few things, can be very controlling of others, too. Lenore “directed” this whole operation; William Francis noted this may have been because she had so little control over her life, that this was something she could at least control. We are the same in this country over cars and fuel. We build larger SUVs all the time and I noted on today’s news radio that owners of these super-cars are now feeling out of control. They can’t afford the gas!

All of us need to realize who *is* in control. Is it what I have: property – stuff – lots of stuff; a lot of which I hardly touch week to week? If I were in the chapel that morning in that chair, instead of Lenore, with all my possessions – how much would I have? How many bags would it take? How much control would I have over it? How much would it be controlling me?

Is God in control? Or am I? Is that this angel’s message?

RTB

*Here and there with the brothers*

## COMMUNITY NOTES

### *Concord NH*

On March 11th, Charles Edward LeClerc was the preacher at the noonday Holy Eucharist at the domestic chapel of the Diocese of New Hampshire, Concord. He wrote to the community the following day: “We anticipated and celebrated the Feast of Saint Gregory the Great and I preached and asked for prayers for the community, that we may have the zeal and courage to offer ‘radical hospitality.’ Bishop Gene [Robinson] has defined ‘radical hospitality’ as offering to those who do not agree with us, that there is room at the Table and in the church for *all*. In true Anglicanism it is o.k. to agree and to disagree, remembering that *all* are loved and embraced by God’s unconditional love.” Amen to that!

### *Norwalk CT*

Though not technically “in” Province 2 due to its Connecticut location, Grace Church, Norwalk, was the site of the Lenten Ember Day of Recollection for Province 2 on March 6th. Gregorian friars from as far away as Ventnor, New Jersey; Yardley, Pennsylvania; and upstate Cortland, New York, plus the greater Metropolitan New York City area arrived in Norwalk to be welcomed by the Rev William Hardwick, Rector of Grace Church, and a faithful group of parishioners.

This was the province’s second visit to Richard Thomas Biernacki’s parish, where he is organist and director of music. The warm, spring-like day featured timely meditations delivered by Richard Thomas and Robert James McLaughlin (seen below) on the day’s theme of “Prayer as Reconciliation,” and the rector delivered a fine sermon at the Holy Eucharist on the subject of forgiveness, the service being assisted by the Rev Nancy Matthias, Richard Matthias’ wife. The luncheon provided by the parish, together with the warm words of welcome from the rector, cemented a true friendship that will be long-standing.



### *South Salem NY*

On March 23rd, the second of three Lenten program sessions at Saint John's Church, South Salem, New York, was led by Tobias Stanislas Haller. The program series was entitled "Discerning God's Will in the Ordinary," and Tobias Stanislas' contribution focused on "Discerning God's Will through Prayer." Saint John's is Richard John Lorino's parish, where he is organist and choir director, and both he and the Rev Lynn Harrington, Rector of Saint John's, joined a number of parishioners to welcome Tobias Stanislas and to add his thoughts on the art of prayerful discernment to their Lenten journey.

### *New Windsor NY*



*Thomas Mark teaches the members of the Saint James' Goshen Cherub Choir.*

Thomas Mark Liotta has been approved as a candidate for ordination to the diaconate by the Bishop and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of New York. Though none of us ever had any doubts, it's very good to get the word! "God willing and the people consenting," he should be ordained in May of 2005. Heartfelt congratulations, dear brother!

### *Goshen NY*

James Mahoney preached at a Lenten Evensong on the feast of Saint Gregory at Saint James Church, where the Rev Carl Lunden is rector, and Thomas Mark serves as minister of music.

### *Manhattan*

This year's recollection of our Patron, Saint Gregory the Great, included some thoughtful comments on Blessed Gregory's life and considerable contribution to the health and good order of the church from Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold during his sermon at the Chapel of Christ the Lord at the Episcopal Church Center in Manhattan that day, with James Teets and



*James Mahoney preaches at the Lenten Evensong.*

William Francis Jones amid the congregation assembled from within the building and throughout the neighborhood.

#### *Ventnor NJ*

Robert James McLaughlin's activities on Saint Gregory's Feast Day were somewhat more active; March 12th was the first day of the two-day Convention of the Diocese of New Jersey and it took place in Wildwood. Robert James, a convention delegate from Epiphany, Ventnor, shared the following: "[The community] was highly honored today at our diocesan convention by Bishop George Councill. At the Holy Eucharist he requested that [Gregorians] read the Prayers of the People. Sr Elizabeth Mary Burke, SSG, and I alternated the readings and were quite proud to do so. After mass I thanked the bishop in the name of the community for his thoughtfulness. He had previously mentioned to me his thankfulness to the Brotherhood in the personage of Richard Thomas Biernacki for his part in [Bishop Councill's] consecration service." (Richard Thomas is Deputy Registrar of Consecrations for the Episcopal Church and often functions as master of ceremonies at these services throughout the church.)

#### *Chicago*

The life and witness of Holy Father Gregory was observed by the Rev James H Dunkerley, Rector of Saint Peter's, Chicago, at the daily mass on March 12th. Gregorian Friars Joseph Basil Gauss and Nathaniel Deward Rahm were present (Nathaniel Deward serves as administrator, organist and director of music at Saint Peter's) and following the service he was moved to send a note to the Brotherhood, reflecting on our brother Thomas Joseph Ross (died December 18, 2001) and how Nathaniel Deward's focus and vocation were developed by Thomas Joseph's loving care. We know that the departed continue to live through us, and it is always welcome to be reminded of a life dedicated to love and service that has made such a lasting impression upon us and upon the church.

#### *Kalamazoo MI*

Congratulations to Thomas Bushnell, who presented a paper on the translation of the works of Saint Bernard at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies, at Western Michigan University. This was his first academic paper in philosophy to get to a conference (he had a presented papers in computer science in the past). The paper addressed the success of Cistercian Publications in providing translations of important monastic (and especially Cistercian) authors. The abstract went on to note:

For understandable reasons, the press focuses on works of current devotional or spiritual interest, and has not released translations of the more polemical or political works of, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux. To the student of history, Bernard's preaching of the Crusade, persecution of Abelard, and attacks on the Cluniacs are very important parts of his thought. This paper will explore the ways in which the publications and translation strategy of Cistercian Publications may have inadvertently contributed to a deficient appreciation of the full breadth of Bernard's writings.

The paper was well received and sparked lively discussion.



### *Los Angeles*

Thomas also took part in the Diocese of Los Angeles Ministry Fair, leading a workshop on the liturgies of Holy Week, which was very well attended and received. The Fair was targeted to worship leaders and planners, and many clergy were present, in addition to musicians and altar guild members. (Photo above by Marie Greatorex)

### *London*

In a press release from the ACNS dated March 8th entitled “Address to the Joint Standing Committee by the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion,” the Rev Canon John L Peterson made the following observation: “Besides financial concerns, the Anglican Observer’s Advisory Council has also been keenly aware that the observer’s staff is tremendously over-stretched in New York. In essence, we have the observer herself, along with her main support staff in the person of Brother William.” Canon Peterson refers, of course, to our own William Francis Jones, and we share the secretary general’s gratitude and admiration for the dedicated service — as well as the countless hours — brought to this important office by one of our Gregorian Friars.

### *Puerto Rico*

James Teets attended the annual meeting of the Companion Diocese Network in his role as coordinator for this partnership in the Episcopal Church (see photo below). It was a time to renew friendships and continue this important work of collaboration in a time when tensions have been brewing in parts of the Anglican Communion.



### *The Philippines*

Every so often Maurice John Grove finds an opportunity to communicate to the world outside the island of Southern Leyte, where his new house is now complete. Maurice John tells us that ministry opportunities abound there, and he occasionally visits Saint Andrew's Seminary in Manila to meet with several Associates of the Brotherhood, some of which are faculty and some students. In an effort to encourage local self-sustaining industry, Maurice John has given chicks to a young man in his village who will start a chicken farm and sell eggs. He has participated in the planting of more than 300 pineapple plants – the first in his region – and he has supported the purchase of seeds for vegetable and flower production. Being retired, Maurice John has the opportunity to visit parishes and church organizations in the Philippines, bringing them a word of encouragement from the “outside world” at just the right time to brighten people's lives.



*Not the Philippines, but Gallup, New Mexico, where Joseph Basil Gauss (right) visited with Peter Budde recently.*

### *A sermon from the end of Epiphany*

## **THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION**

Today Fr Steve will commission me in a new Ministry of Christian Conciliation and Mediation. In this ministry I will work with married couples who are experiencing difficulties in their relationship and considering divorce as a possibility.

This is an outgrowth of my formation work within the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, a contemporary, non-residential religious community within the Episcopal Church. While Gregorian brothers take vows, we do not take the vow of celibacy as more traditional monks or friars do. Gregorian brothers can be single if they choose, but can also choose to find the road to disciplined chastity within the context of family life. I'm blessed in my marriage to Diane and, as many of you know, we are further blessed with two sons, Drew and Ian.

Although some Gregorian brothers live in common and work full-time in ministry, most live as I do, with their families, with secular jobs, striving to witness to the sacredness of all work, that all is to be done with love to the glory of God alone.

While that is our main apostolate, during the third and final year of the community's formation program, before a Gregorian friar makes an initial profession of vows, we are asked to form a parish ministry development committee, and in conjunction with that committee work to discern God's further call to us as servants of the servants of God.



I will be forever grateful to Joanne Eckler, Cheryl Harman, Glory King and Dennis Nagel for the 10 months they spent with me as I discerned a call to work with troubled marriages. Although he was not able to be here today, I am also especially grateful to a Palm Beach Christian Mediator by the name of Tom Caprio, who went far above and beyond what I could have ever hoped for in providing me with ample opportunity for observing and participating in supervised mediations. As a result, following the necessary training I was certified by the Florida Supreme Court during the past year as a County and Family Mediator.

A mediator serves as a neutral and impartial facilitator of discussions, problem-solving and negotiations. Christian conciliators also assist in discernment, helping couples to walk with God in the midst of a dispute, with the aim of fostering spiritual growth and healthier relationships in the future.

Through this new ministry I will strive to resolve marital conflict with the aim of achieving reconciliation. Disputes over substantive issues often can be resolved through cooperative negotiations. This approach proceeds from a sound biblical foundation: In Paul's Letter to the Philippians it is written, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (2:4).

The damage done by divorce is much lamented, but as a society we've yet to deal with it constructively. Nationally, roughly 2.5 million people divorce each year. Additionally, each year well over one million children are directly affected by divorce. Nearly fifty percent of all marriages end in divorce. The State of Florida, with over 80,000 divorces each year, has the tenth highest divorce rate in the country. Although I do not have the current statistics for Palm Beach County, a few minutes south of here in Broward County there are two divorces for every three marriages, one of the highest divorce rates in the State.

**I**s it the kind of love that is based primarily on the physical attraction that is, it seems, as much governed by our hormones as our hearts?

On a personal note, my brother went through a particularly bitter divorce. One of Diane's brothers has divorced, as have many friends and colleagues. Most, if not all of us, probably have been touched by divorce in some way.

Many divorced individuals report feeling abandoned by the church or too embarrassed to reach out to the church for help. It's a difficult and disappointing time. It's often a time of confusion, vulnerability, self-doubt, hurt and fear – so very different from the way it all likely began.

At many weddings one can hear portions of the same reading from First Corinthians that was read so well for us this morning.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes in all things, endures all things.

That very passage was read when Diane and I were married in 1981. That was also the year Prince Charles married Lady Diana. Many couples probably begin married life with storybook expectations, expectations not always realized. After all, they're in love and it's exciting. But is it the kind of love that will last and endure? Or is it the kind of love that is based primarily on the physical attraction that is, it seems, as much governed by our hormones as our hearts?

The Greek word for this love is *eros*, from which we get the English word *erotic*. That is not, however, the same word used by Paul when addressing the Corinthians. While *eros* connotes a love associated with physical attraction and *philos* can connote a love based on the emotions and affections, Saint Paul used *agapé*, which opens up to include a more spiritually transcendent, even divine love: it is the love based on choice and loyalty. *Agapé* is the word used to describe the form of love that God has for us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." (John 3:16) Christ is the perfect expression of *agapé* love. And *agapé* love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

In its original context this message to the Corinthians was unrelated to the subject of marriage. Instead, it appears that the Corinthians – for all their talent and spiritual gifts – did not have their priorities straight. They had become obsessed with the relative value of their various spiritual gifts, perhaps believing them to be reflective of their own personal significance. It appears that they were self-absorbed, more interested in how the exercise of those gifts might say, "Look at me."

The situation in Corinth reminds me of an observation by Jonathan Swift, the author of *Gulliver's Travels* and an Anglican priest: "We have just enough religion to make us hate one another, but not enough to cause us to love one another." The Corinthians had just enough spiritual awareness to fall prey to competitive envy and pride, but they struggled to love and be reconciled. In today's passage Paul essentially told them that their passion is misplaced. They needed to love in order to look past their differences.

Paul plainly states that their many spiritual gifts are of no consequence if not exercised out of love. Even faith itself is of no account if it is not lived out in love. Our Lord summed up all of the Law of the Old Testament by reference to the centrality of love. And Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love as he loves us. (John 13:34-35) Love sums up the Christian's responsibilities. (Romans 13:8) Is it any wonder then that the ancients remarked, "Ah, those Christians, how they do love."

Paul's message is still relevant for us today. As the Episcopal Church and the world-wide Anglican Communion live through the wake of General Convention's actions, we would do well not to let any differences divide or lessen our love for one another.

Let us continue to be guided by our traditional Anglican approach. Recently, in an open letter, the Most Reverend Martin Barahona, the Diocesan Bishop of El Salvador, Primate of the Anglican Church of the Central Region of the Americas (and an Associate of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory), described "being in communion" Anglican style as being united in the essentials of the faith with diversity in the non-essential, and with love for one another at all times. As Fr Steve has put it, communion is greater than confession. This is captured in the tenderness of our communion rail, which is open to all baptized Christians, regardless of whether we agree in all particulars.

And while Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13 were uttered with marriage only partly in mind, they are nonetheless particularly relevant for married couples and are appropriately read at weddings. From its earliest days the church has understood its relationship with Christ Jesus as analogous to that of a spousal relationship. In marriage we are to witness to and live out God's love for us; a love not simply based on the physical attraction of *eros* or the common interests and affections of *philos*, but the depth and commitment of *agapé*.

Sadly, as borne out by the divorce statistics, the witness possible within marriage does not always happen as we would like. Humans are fallible creatures with a seemingly innate preference for the selfish and the self-centered. Those ugly characteristics can sometimes show when living intimately with another person day-in and day-out.

**T**he church understands its relationship with Christ Jesus as analogous to marriage: we are to witness to and live out God's love for us; a love not simply based on the physical attraction of *eros* or the common interests and affections of *philos*, but the depth and commitment of *agapé*.

If a partner dwells on and becomes obsessed with their differences to the point where he or she boasts about his or her own contributions and, equally problematic, fails to first fairly consider the contributions and interests of the other, then the marriage is indeed in trouble.

In this Ministry of Christian Conciliation and Mediation, I hope to help couples know *agapé* love. I ask for your prayers in support of reconciliation.

In the season of Lent the subject and need for reconciliation are prominent. Let us at all times remember Paul's message. Whatever penitential exercises we might do and whatever sacrifices we might make – all of them will be for naught if not done for love. Perhaps our Lenten practices of discipline and self-denial (carried over to the rest of the year) should simply take the form of always serving others before caring for ourselves.

I believe with all my heart this is the witness that the world and all who are in troubled relationships need today – to see, to know and to above all experience *agapé* love. If we can develop or strengthen the habits of looking past our differences in love by imitating our Lord Jesus – all to the glory of God alone – then perhaps the secular world would once again say, “Ah, those Christians, how they do love.”

*Mark Andrew Jones*

## INTERCESSIONS

<b>The Brotherhood</b>		The Associates and Friends of the Brotherhood	Norman Hall, George Koerner, Henry Fukui, J Steward Slocum and James Gundrum
Episcopal Visitor	Sun	Religious Communities	James Olson
Rodney R Michel		The Sisters of Saint Gregory	Paul
Episcopal Visitors Emeriti		Sacramentine & Visitandine Nuns	Gavin and Connor
<i>Horace WB Donegan d 11.11.91</i>		Society of the Atonement	Robert Napper
<i>Paul Moore, jr d 5.1.03</i>		Order of Agapé & Reconciliation	Mavis Newby
<i>Walter D Dennis d 3.30.03</i>		Camaldolese Benedictines	Lillian Trybulec
<b>Life and Annual Professed</b>		Society of Saint John the Evangelist	Doug Guiles
Richard Thomas Biernacki		Community of the Paraclete	Elizabeth Mahar
<i>John Nidecker d 6.20.88</i>		Congregation of the Anglican Oblates of Saint Benedict	Clarence James Jurrens
James Teets		Community of the Transfiguration	Mario, Augustina, and Ana Laura
<b>Luke Anthony Nowicki</b>		The Order of Julian of Norwich	Yassir Nasim Malik
<i>John Peter Clark d 2.25.94</i>	Mon	<b>For healing</b>	Martha Harpest
William Francis Jones		Brothers Luke Anthony, Tobias Stanislas, Charles,	Esperanza Horner
Stephen Storen		Damian-Curtis, William Edward, Edward Riley, Patrick Ignatius, William David, James Mahoney	Donna Cover
<i>Thomas Joseph Ross d 12.18.01</i>		Ian, Jane, Mary, David Don	Doris Stevenson
Tobias Stanislas Haller		Susanna Bede & Elizabeth Mary	John Howe
<i>William Bunting d 10.12.88</i>		Ida	Frank Rose
Edward Munro		Carl	Mercedes McCambridge
Charles Kramer	Tue	Burt	Charles Day
<i>Bernard Fessenden d 8.10.93</i>		Christina	Ellen Dodds
Donovan Aidan Bowley		Bob	Ross Barrett Hildebrand
Michael David Elvstrom		Sheldon and Tom	Chester Hazen
Edward Riley		Jeremiah and Jenny	Francis and Vincent Nappo
Christopher Stephen Jenks		Bobbie Jo and Jay	Bernard LaReau
<b>Ciarán Anthony DellaFera</b>		Maria and Judith	David Bell Birney IV
William Edward Orce	Wed	Jeannie	Dale McCaulley
Damian-Curtis Kellum		Carol	<b>Intentions</b>
Richard John Lorino		William	Joseph Richey House
Ronald Augustine Fox		Charles	Fessenden Recovery Ministries
Maurice John Grove		Michael and Nancy	Dove House
Charles Edward LeClerc		Doug	Baltimore Int'l Seafarers' Center
Virgilio Fortuna		Jane	Saint James Fordham; Trinity,
Gordon John Stanley	Thu	Cassie	Stoughton MA; Christ Church,
Karekin Madteos Yarian		Janet	San Antonio; Saint John's,
Patrick Thompson		Michael	Brooklyn; Saint Peter's, Chicago;
William David Everett		Thomas and Willy	Grace, Norway
Thomas Bushnell		Renee	Brothers Karekin Madteos,
Thomas Mark Liotta		Leigh	William David, William Francis,
James Mahoney		Andrew	Thomas Bushnell, Tobias
<b>Patrick Ignatius Dickson</b>		Lois and Suzanne	Stanislas
Robert James McLaughlin	Fri	Stephanie	Aldersgate UMC Dobbs Ferry
Peter Budde		Janet	Emmanuel and Robert
John Henry Ernestine		Victoria, Keith and Edward	Cindy and Betty Olson
Francis Sebastian Medina		Mary	Marc, June, Adam, Karen, Juanita
Aelred Bernard Dean		<b>Departed</b>	and Seth
Joseph Basil Gauss		Charlotte Morgan, Arsene & Louise Lemarier	Judith
Mark Andrew Jones			James
<b>Emmanuel Williamson</b>			William
<b>Novices</b>	Sat		Christopher
Richard Matthias			Keli, Eliza, Bill and Megan
William Henry Benefield			Derron and Dennis
Nathanael Deward Rahm			The Sisters of Saint Margaret
Thomas Lawrence Greer			Peter
<b>Postulants</b>			Esther Hazen
Kevin Harrop Valentine			Thanksgiving
Ron E Fender			The witness of the Episcopal Church in the Anglican Communion