

# THE SERVANT



*Borage and  
daylilies...*

*...and an angel's  
wing.*

**#248**

*Summer 2018*



*Brothers and friends at the Province 7 Quiet Day in Denver  
 (back row l to r) David Luke Henton, Scott Michael Pomerenk, James Patrick Hall,  
 William Henry Benefield, Jon Moore  
 (front row l to r) Alex Stark, Erica Pomerenk, Rob Leacock, JJ Bernal, Tony Blando*

### *The Servant*

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## **WHERE THERE'S A WILL**

You can assist and further the ministries of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory by remembering the community in your will. If you choose to do so, the following form of wording is appropriate:

*I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, Inc., a New York State not-for-profit corporation and its successors for ever \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_ percent of my estate to be used in such a manner as determined by its Directors.*

## CALL OF NATURE

A popular theologian once said that Jesus was not crucified because he said, “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow,” but rather, “Consider the scribes and pharisees, how they steal.” The oversimplification may be pardoned: stealing is not confined to money and property, and when caught at it, perpetrators are inclined to strike back — violently.

At this time of year we may do well to emulate the Lord of life and give some attention to the lilies of the field and the world of nature they represent. With the increasing urbanization of what was once true rural living, it is important to remember that Jesus was a country boy. His public ministry took him to hilltops and valleys, out in the middle of grassy fields, under the open sky.

Remember too, that the Master of Life taught by parables which imaged mainly nature themes: shepherds tending sheep, farmers planting crops, tiny mustard seeds growing into mighty trees. He used animals: foxes, wolves, birds, hens, swine, the camel, and the donkey. What did Jesus perceive and emphasize in our Father's world? British preacher GT Bellhouse provides an insight here. Jesus was always conscious of

- Ⓣ the wonder and mystery of nature;
- Ⓣ the “reliability, regularity and responsiveness” of nature; and
- Ⓣ the peacefulness of nature, even when nature produces and exhibits fierce turbulence and terrific storms.

In the first there is the thought of the secrecy of plant growth, of mystery blowing in the wind. The great nature-lover is also a lover of peace. Under the second, Jesus cites the dependability of nature. We do not gather grapes from thorns. Even when a seed seems to die, God has provided a resurrection. We know that. And, in the third — consider the lilies: they send down their roots without trumpets or fanfares. They lift their heads to the sun and rain.

What a contrast to our frenetic and often furious fretting. Why cannot we, who are guarded and guided by the divine wisdom, love, and power, live with the peace of nature at the center? With Christ, we are never blind to nature; we are also aware of God's world of wonder, purpose and peace.

RTB



## COMMUNITY NOTES

David Luke Henton represented the Brotherhood at the annual joint conference of the National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities (NÆCC) and the Council of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas (CAROA), which took place at the Convent of Saint John the Divine in Toronto earlier this year. This annual joint meeting of communities in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada brought together almost 50 brothers and sisters from throughout North America and beyond for a week of business meetings, workshops, worship, prayer and fellowship. A founding member of NÆCC, the Brotherhood continues to play a leadership role in this growing witness to the diversity of religious life in the church.

The business agenda at the conference included the finalization of plans for our joint presence at General Convention, including the management of our shared booth and witness in the exhibit hall. The Rev Robert Fruehwirth of Saint Michael's Episcopal Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, led a four-session series of workshops on Technology in Religious Life. The round of Daily Offices and the Holy Eucharist began each day with Morning Prayer and Lectio Divina in small groups. All in attendance enjoyed the outstanding accommodations, delicious meals, and warm hospitality of the Sisters of Saint John the Divine, and the shared worship and mutual fellowship of the week together continued to witness to the close, cooperative, and complementary relationship among all of the member communities of CAROA and NÆCC, as well as between the two organizations.

† The Brotherhood's Council met this spring in Baltimore, with a hefty agenda, as always, including the vote to accept the formal requests from two novices — Angel Gabriel Roque and David Benedict Hedges — to make their first profes-



*Representatives of communities of The Episcopal Church at the joint CAROA / NÆCC meeting.*

sions of vows; an interim nomination which then went to each novice's province for a confirming vote of the professed brothers in each. In addition, Council approved Russell Peter Gallagher and Tommy Mandri continuing in the novitiate joined by William D Crockett. All rites of the community will take place during Annual Convocation and the assembly of the whole community in August of this year.

Council elected the following officials to take up or continue in various offices: Director of Postulants and Novices Tobias Stanislas Haller, Treasurer and Director of Public Relations James Teets, Director of Convocation Liturgy and Music Nathanael Deward Rahm, Infirmarian Joseph Basil Gauss, and Administrator Eric Shelley.

Council approved the annual Brotherhood Outreach Grants. The following charitable organizations received grants towards their ministries:

- † Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church in Pompano Beach, Florida, for "The Holy Grill" ministry which provides food for the homeless and hungry in their area;
- † Rio Grande Borderland Ministries, an agency of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande which provides food, clothing, infant and child care supplies and other services to those in need on both sides of the US/Mexico border;
- † Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Chattanooga, toward the ongoing response ability of the BSG Chattanooga Outreach Fund in providing for the needs of the homeless and hungry in their area; and
- † The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence on behalf of the Companions of Dorothy the Worker in San Francisco, to assist them with the CDW Referral Hotline providing resource referrals to members of the LGBTQ community for housing, legal, trans-advocacy, substance and alcohol abuse recovery, and suicide prevention; the Sacred Table Fellowship Program, a monthly event addressing topics of spiritual concern to the LGBTQ community, along with food; supplementing the costs of advertising the Hotline and the Sacred Table Program, and various other administrative costs.

Though the Brotherhood is a religious community which provides educational and spiritual support for the ministry of its members, it is a great pleasure to be able to offer financial support for ministries in which they have personal involvement or concern.

Ministers Provincial and officials of the community reported on their concerns and work. Council also engaged in several discussions, including some that will come before annual Chapter, concerning: the size and role of Council; the possibility of celebrating rites of the community at times other than Annual Convocation; streamlining the interview process for postulancy, and the commissioning rite at Annual Convocation; increasing regular contact with postulants-prospective; and the present disposition of the community's archives.



Council approved Thomas Burnham of Southwest Florida for continued discernment towards postulancy at Annual Convocation.

### Province 2



*John Henry preaching*

John Henry Ernestine begins a new ministry at Grace Church Van Vorst in Jersey City NJ, a historic church where our late Episcopal Visitor Paul Moore Jr, served as rector, cultivating a focus on social justice in the heart of the marginalized in Jersey City. He has been attending for over a year, and shortly after arriving was called upon to lead Bible Studies, then a Lenten retreat, and then to preach. After consultation with rector the Rev Laurie J Wurm the vestry and Newark Bishop Mark M Beckwith agreed with John Henry's new role as Associate Pastor, charged with oversight of outreach programs. William Francis



*John Henry with William Francis (both photos by Dean Steigauf)*

Jones was able to be present for John Henry's institution in this new ministry.

David John Batrick concluded his ministry as Archdeacon for Maitland in the Diocese of Newcastle, Anglican Church of Australia, and commenced a new appointment as Archdeacon for Mission and Mission Planning. Having worked for the last four years focused on a geographical archdeaconry, this new assignment provides the opportunity to minister across the whole of the diocese assisting congregations to focus on planning and developing local mission and evangelism programs. He has also been appointed the Deputy Chair of the Anglican Board of Mission, the Australian equivalent of Episcopal Relief and Development. He will be working closely with the Executive Director and the staff of ABM to facilitate planning for the delivery of the organization's new strategic directions. He continues his ministry as Rector of the Parish of East Maitland, and as a canon of Christ Church Cathedral.



*David John in canonical finery (photo N Foster)*

### Province 3

The Diocese of Maryland held it's annual convention in May, and for the second year the Brotherhood maintained a display and information table at the two-day



*(l to r): Tobias Stanislas, James, Edward, Jacalyn, and Christopher*

event. Edward Munro, Minister Provincial of Province 3, led the delegation which staffed the table, assisted by James Teets, Tobias Stanislas Haller and postulant-prospective Christopher Werth. Many people stopped by to chat — some who remembered us from last year, some just curious, some who knew us from our parishes and other ministries — including the bishops, clergy and friends from around this wide-spread diocese, and especially Sr Jacalyn Hild from the Anamchara Fellowship.

Edward took part in “March for our Lives” in protest against gun violence, marching with the contingent from St George’s Church, Glen Dale MD.

Tobias Stanislas continues his ministry doing supply at a number of Maryland parishes. He recently served at St Matthias in the Hamilton neighborhood where he lived as a child, and reminisced with parish members who attended or taught at the nearby elementary school.



*Edward at the Washington DC protest*



*Priscilla Sicard and Tobias Stanislas outside the large St Matthias clothing pantry (photo Mary Catherine Day)*

The parish has a wonderful outreach ministry started by dedicated volunteers; it serves hundreds each week with meals and access to a large food and clothing pantry.

## Province 4

Novice Angel Gabriel Roque traveled to Cleveland Heights, Ohio to participate in the Evangelism Matters Conference as a panel member. Taking place at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church there, the panel discussion was broadcast live and about 21,000 people tuned in online, joining over 400 who attended in the flesh from all over the United States, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. His participation was well received and he had a lot of fun being a bit *dangerous* around all of those people! The Presiding Bishop, who preached at the event, encouraged him, and Angel Gabriel was cited at the closing panel as a "Road Monastic."

The following week, Angel Gabriel and a group of chaperones took a large youth group from the Diocese of Southeast Florida to Washington DC to participate in the "March for Our Lives" rally against gun violence. Angel Gabriel knew



*Angel Gabriel at the March for Our Lives*

some of the people who were casualties in the attack at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. He formed a special bond with a group of 15 LGBT youth from Cincinnati, Ohio, Indiana and Oregon; they were a bit nervous to talk to him at first because of his habit, but he complimented them on their rainbow sign and when he took out his rainbow peace flag, they all started screaming and giving him hugs.

In mid-June Angel Gabriel served as one of the youth ministers of the Diocese of Southeast Florida at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. He joined a large group of young people from his parish — Saint Mary Magdalene, Coral Springs, Florida — and other parishes in the diocese. This week-long retreat is an annual event, but this year it touched on the aftermath of the traumatic school shooting that took place at the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in February of this year. All of the students who participated in this retreat, as well as the diocesan youth ministers, benefited greatly from this time apart, to reflect and to re-establish connections between friends.



*Angel Gabriel with Emily Velvet at Kanuga*



## Province 5



*Ronald Augustine, preaching on Good Friday (photo S Twadell)...*



*... and with Bishop Montgomery and Joseph Basil*

Ronald Augustine Fox preached the Good Friday sermon at Church of the Atonement, Chicago. He and Joseph Basil Gauss also had a lovely visit with Bishop James Montgomery.

## Province 7

The brothers of Province 7 — Minister Provincial William Henry Benefield, David Luke Henton and James Patrick Hall — together with Scott Michael Pomerenk of Province 8, gathered for the Gregorian patronal festival in Denver, at the home of James Patrick and Tony Blando. Joining them were the Rev Canon Jose Juan “J.J.” Bernal, Rector of Saint Christopher’s, El Paso, Texas, and Canon for Latino Ministry in the Diocese of the Rio Grande; the Rev Rob Leacock, Chaplain of the Episcopal Collegiate School in Little Rock, Arkansas; Jon Moore and Alex Stark, fellow parishioners of Scott Michael at Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in Denver (and junior warden and newsletter editor there respectively); and Scott Michael’s spouse, Erica Pomerenk, looking radiant in her eighth month of pregnancy.

Friday night, everyone attended a spectacular Lenten fish fry at Good Shepherd Roman Catholic Church, which has become something of a Gregorian tradition when meeting in Denver during Lent. The Rev “J.J.” led the first part of Saturday’s retreat program, in which he shared some of his experiences in life’s



*Tony Blando (l) and James Patrick (r) join Deacon Shepic and Canon Bernal for the Eucharist at St Francis Center.*

journey and ministries in Mexico and in the USA, in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches, and in the Dioceses of California, Dallas and the Rio Grande, culminating in his current work on both sides of the border, including efforts to intervene in human trafficking. “J.J.” also serves with David Luke on the Board of Rio Grande Borderland Ministries. The second part of Saturday’s retreat program was devoted to informal conversation about Gregorian community life in Province 7 and beyond. Saturday evening, James Patrick and Tony treated the Gregorians to a professional comedy improv show near their home.

Sunday morning, the Gregorians joined James Patrick and Tony at Saint Francis Center, the Episcopal homeless day center, where James Patrick coordinates the Sunday Holy Eucharist and Tony provides music. “J.J.” celebrated the mass at Saint Francis, while William Henry served as Intercessor and James Patrick as a Eucharistic Minister. Afterwards, everyone attended the Principal Sunday Eucharist at Saint Thomas, where Scott Michael preached at a liturgy celebrating our community’s patron, Saint Gregory the Great. Scott Michael’s sermon focused heavily both on the life of our patron and on our contemporary life as Gregorian Friars.

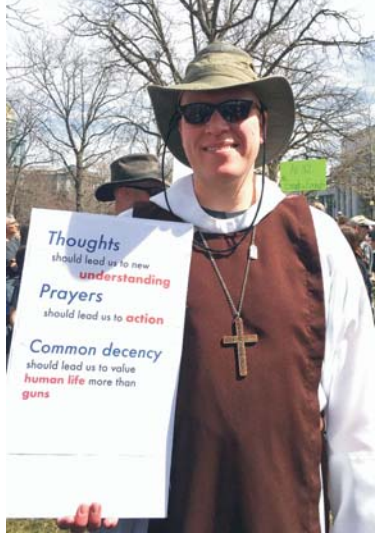
As always at community gatherings, the weekend was framed by the round of Daily Offices, good food, fellowship, and new friends. The Province 7 Brothers extend their gratitude to Alex, Erica, “J.J.,” John and Rob for joining them, to Province 8 for loaning Scott Michael for this occasion, and to James Patrick and Tony for their wonderful and extravagant hospitality.

## Province 8

Our novice in the Diocese of Arizona, David Benedict Hedges, has been asked to plan the liturgy for the ordination of the sixth Bishop of Arizona to be held next March.

† Scott Michael Pomerenk and his wife, Erica, participated in the massive demonstration titled “Denver’s March for our Lives,” in March. They marched with their fellow parishioners from Saint Thomas Episcopal Church, Denver, and tens of thousands of their fellow citizens.

† Scott Michael and Erica welcomed daughter Beatrice into the world in April. Welcome, little one!



*Scott Michael at the Denver March*



*Scott Michael and Beatrice*