

The Shepherd's Staff Newsletter

The Right Reverend D. M. Ashman

Late Eastertide Edition



Saint Joseph's Seminar

Summer Session

Summer Session **via zoom** will occur during the last full week of July – 21st to 25th. Each day will begin at 9:00 a.m. with Morning Prayer (or another Prayer Book Office) followed by lectures in theoretical and applied liturgics, led by Bishops Ashman and Hansen. After the morning lectures, there will be a two-hour lunch break. At 2:00 p.m. there will be lectures and demonstrations on liturgical chant and music, led by Canon Weber – concluding with Evening Prayer. The provost strongly encourages attendees not to skip the offices – it is a vital part of the experience. That said, please understand that these classes are designed to help the clergy – young and old by date of ordination – but also keep in mind that interested laity are more than welcome (and encouraged) to join the clergy and postulants.

To register for the Summer session please send the following information to Bishop Ashman (bishopashman@gmail.com), Archbishop Schultz (bw.schultz28@gmail.com), Bishop Hansen (augustine.chico@gmail.com) and Canon Matthew Weber (palaeologos@gmail.com): your name, parish, whether you are clergy or postulant or laity, your cell phone number and if you are auditing or taking Summer Session for credit. The tuition is \$100 for credit; \$50 for audit. Do not send any money to the San Francisco Office; rather send tuition to Canon Matthew Weber, c/o Saint Joseph of Arimathea Seminary, 2316 Bowditch, P.O. Box 40020, Berkeley, CA 94704

Michaelmas Term

The following classes will be offered in the Fall term

- I. Practicum for the Diaconate. [10 classes]
**Required of all deacons (who have not completed the course) and all aspirants for the Diaconate
- II. History and Religion: Post Classical India, Asia, Europe, Americas, Africa; Exploration, Renaissance
- III. Seminar: *The Screwtape Letters* (textbook necessary - very inexpensive, Audio CD recommended)
- IV. Latin VIII: Readings from the Old Testament, New Testament and the 1560 University BCP
- V. Fourth Year Biblical Greek: Advanced Grammar and Readings from Scripture
[If there is demand, First Year Latin or First Year Greek will be offered]

Recap of the 2025 Synod

On Tuesday, May 6th a noon requiem mass was held for the Reverend Canon Charles Dillon followed by a hosted lunch given by the ladies of the St. Joseph's and tours of the refurbished Morse House. The afternoon meditation was held in the library of the Morse House and the day concluded with Sung Evening Prayer and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

On Wednesday May 7th at 8:00 a.m. a second requiem for Canon Dillon was offered followed by the Standing Committee, a roundtable led by Fathers Gasatura, Gregory and Newcomb. After lunch the Board of Directors met followed by a reception hosted by the Anglican Church Women culminating in the Bishop's Auction to raise funds to help clergy attend Synod.

On Thursday May 8th a chalice and paten were consecrated by the bishops before the 8:00 a.m. Eucharist which was followed by a morning workshop on the Diocesan Youth Camp given by Fathers Canda and Brown. That was followed by the ACW luncheon with the drawing for the Father Robert Ponc Chasuble (won by Josephine McGrath for her husband Father McGrath, a navy chaplain station in Virginia), the ACW meeting with a fascinating presentation on service dogs by Kathy Waddell, the Clericus and Evening Prayer. The Clergy/Wives Dinner was held at a local restaurant and the laity were on their own but some organized into a group at the hotel and shared many miracles of their lives.

On Friday May 9th after Morning Prayer the Synod Business Meeting was held followed by a no host lunch and the Synodical Mass at Saint Martin of Tours Parish in nearby Concord. The Synod ended with a banquet and a **Saturday morning** Eucharist was offered for those who did not have to leave early to be home for Sunday Mass.











The Bishop's Address

The Thirty-fourth Synod of the Diocese of the Western States

May Ninth, 2025

We all know C. S. Lewis, the great Anglican apologist of the twentieth century, who wrote many books which are still avidly read and studied. One of his lesser-known works was a translation of the Roman poet Virgil's poem *The Aeneid* rendered in metrical couplets with the final syllables rhyming. Like Virgil Lewis intended his incomplete works burned but unlike Virgil's *Aeneid* which was saved intact, Lewis' *Aeneid* was almost lost except for the intervention of Walter Hooper, Lewis' secretary and biographer, who saved about twenty percent of this wonderful work from the fire. In medieval times, Virgil was considered a Virtuous Pagan who was, by prevenient grace, inspired by the Holy Ghost as in his so-called messianic prophecies. My point is that both Lewis and Virgil produced priceless works of literature; and in a world that has lost most of its Christian fervor, we are the Walter Hoopers who are saving what the Christian West has pretty much lost. That is why we are here.

To begin, I want to thank our faithful Coadjutor Bishop Peter Hansen for giving the Bishop's Address last year, when I was still recovering from my "medical mis-adventures" and, now back in the saddle, God willing, I do not want to waste time. My recovery in many ways is still progressing but I am reminded of Henri Nouwen's little book entitled *The Wounded Healer*. We are all wounded by our sins, but we are all cleansed by the Blood of the Cross. Nouwen picked up on the psychologist Carl Jung's same idea: that an analyst can help a patient because, like the patient, he too is wounded, and he can use his weaknesses to help his patients. Nouwen makes the same argument in pastoral theology: that we can use our pain and suffering to find compassion (spell that love, agape, charity) and forgiveness in all our relationships with our brothers and sisters. So, by self-examination, patience and using God's grace we can be effective agents change in this world.

In every Eucharist we hear: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* This, my brothers and sisters, is our Father's Business with which we must endeavour to apply ourselves. **Our Father's Business** is what the Episcopal Church lost and is our *raison d'être*, our reason for being, our calling, our vocation; our love for our Father in Heaven.

This last year we have seen our weaknesses and those of others take their toll. Many of our parishes face declining revenues and losses from the hearse and moving van. But Jesus saves! Remember Dr. Robert Schuller who built the Crystal Cathedral from an outdoor ministry in an old drive-in theater in Orange CA with the slogan *Bloom where you are planted*; well, it's now the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Orange. We lost the Reverend Canon Charles "Rusty" Dillon to an auto accident and his church, Saint Stephen's in Oakville, and the Parish of Saint Mark in Portland needed clerical leadership. I say needed, not needs, because Our Father has answered many prayers and two men have stepped forward: In Portland, Mr. Alastair Jaques, who has done magnificent work as a lay reader, will soon, God willing, be made a deacon. In Oakville, Father Benjamin Lawrence has accepted the position of Vicar. He will still live near Redding but will drive to Napa to care for the Saint Stephen's folks. God our Father does supply.

I told my Los Angeles congregation, who are my family, that I most admire the laity and the clergy who, in the face of challenging circumstances, especially in small parishes, continue to "hang in there" and love each other as brothers and sisters. And I have said the same to my Santa Barbara family. This last

Sunday, we had a third time visitor in Los Angeles, and I finally got to talk to him at coffee hour, so I can't emphasize enough how important it is that we welcome visitors, try to have some sort of "coffee hour" every Sunday and get to know one another better. And I have been invited to some of your coffee hours over the years with fond memories – especially when I wore a black shirt.

And we must beware of the ABC Syndrome (attendance, buildings, cash). Yes, o yes, we must evangelize and try to grow but for the right reasons, not for our vanity. We must never forget that ABC Theology was one of the tools which the devil used so effectively to bring theological and moral corruption to the Episcopal Church and which caused Bishop Morse and the founders of the Anglican Province of Christ the King to stand up and fight. And we must never forget our APCK founders: dear Canon Dodd our "air force" from San Francisco to San Diego, Father Richard Gilman Bishop Morse's secretary for years and years, Canon Boardman Reed who flew B'17s in World War II and P-51s in Korea, Canon Francis Read our great Canon lawyer, Bishop James Clark of the old Diocese of the South, - and yes, even those with whom charity failed and dropped away. May they rest eternally in our Father's arms.

I would also like to recognize some of our oldest, by date of ordination, ministers who labor in the vineyard and tend the sheep. In addition to our coadjutor who needs no introduction, there is also Canon Edward Jones who has served in California, Arizona, who is now again starting Saint Mary at the Cross Mission in Texas; and Dean David Napier who assists faithfully at Saint Joseph's Seminary Chapel; Canon Steven Dart who has led his faithful flock in Cave Creek for three decades; and Father Larry Shaddix who has worked many parishes in California and will now assume the function of Dean of a new Deanery of San Joaquin which like the Valley of the Sun Deanery in Arizona will provide prayer and fellowship for clergy from Bakersfield to the Oregon border – and for any priest who want to join. There are more of these wonderful ministers whose forgiveness I humbly beg.

And that brings me back to the forgiveness word! Our founders, Bishop Hansen and those senior clergy I acknowledged, have all had periods of exile and walking in the wilderness. They are our example because they have taught us how to love. They have taken the wounds of sin and Satan and triumphed for the sake of their brothers and sisters. Finally, and continuing in that theme, I would be deeply remiss if I did not publicly thank the wives of our clergy for their love and longsuffering and the invaluable work of the Anglican Church Women; and of course, our heroine and heart of Synod, Nona Gourley.

Finally, I would like us to pause and reflect upon our mutual vocation to serve our Father in Heaven, in the Diocese of the Western States, Anglican Province of Christ the King. We are a constituent part of Christ's Holy Catholic Church and are called to keep the FAITH: pure and unstained for generations to come. Whether we survive as an institution or not is irrelevant (never forget the debt we owe to the Non Jurors), but if we have taught LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF, then we will have done that which it was our duty to do. If we have taught that by our own wounds and suffering, we can find the grace to heal others, then we leave an indelible legacy. If we go to church on Sunday, tell God we are sorry for our sins, receive his most precious Body and Blood, and labor in the vineyard every hour of our life, we will see God face to face.