



The Evangelist
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The Church of
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Montreal

EDITORIAL

By TONY WHITEHEAD

When I was doing my Undergraduate Degree at Queen Mary College, my friend and I would cycle out on Sunday to explore the country. One Sunday, we set out in sunshine to cycle to St Alban's Cathedral for Morning Service. But just as we arrived down the steep hill, the clouds opened and torrential rain lashed down and we took our bikes into the Cathedral's entrance and padlocked them together. The Minister remarked what a terrible day it was because it had been raining all night as well! I joked that I would pray for it to stop by end of Morning Service!

Just as we reached Communion and the Minister raised the Host, the sun burst out making the Cathedral a blaze of colour and brilliancy with a great white light on the Host! My friend looked at me and said that I must have prayed very strongly to convince God to change the weather. I answered that I had told God off for giving us another soaking for the third Sunday running, but I thanked Him for a Cathedral to shelter in! The lashing rain had cleaned the windows so they had never sparkled so brilliantly in years. The wet and glum congregation became animated and noisy as their Prayer and

Hymn books pages glowed in reds, greens, and blues.

After Coffee and Biscuits as we were leaving, the Minister grabbed my arm and said, "How did you do that"?! I said that I had complained to God about the rain every time we cycled! He burst out in gales of laughter and said I must trust God a lot to tell him off! I said only when I am wet and cold. Well he said we should come every Sunday as it was always raining in St. Albans on Sundays.

Tony



REFLECTIONS

BY FR. KEITH SCHMIDT

Dear Parishioners & Friends:

I don't know if you have seen the film *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (do!) which is about a group of British retirees who have moved to India to cope with their reduced financial circumstances. They are all living in a so called 'luxury' hotel, but when the promise doesn't quite fit the reality, the young and charming proprietor replies "All will be well in the end, and if all is not well, it is not yet the end!"

It is a bit like the Kingdom that Jesus speaks to his disciples about; the Kingdom is already present with us but is not fully present because of the brokenness and passing nature of our world. We both celebrate that which is and that which is yet to be. The idea of Sabbath can be something like that as well.

When I was young, in my part of rural Ontario, nothing happened except church on Sundays. No farmer went out to till the soil on the Sabbath, and if anyone tried to cut their lawn you can be sure the whole neighbourhood would give its stern stare of rebuke come Monday

morning in response. It was perhaps a bit too restrictive, now however, rare is the Sunday in summer that farmers are not in the field. And as most clergy will tell you, people are far too busy on Summer Sundays to come to church.

Business may not be next to godliness, but it gives a pretty good impression of it in much of our culture. And yet we all need a time of rest, a Sabbath. Even God rested in the last day of the week from Creation.

So take some time this summer and enjoy Sabbath, a foretaste of the kingdom which is and which is yet to be.

Keith +



HIGH CHURCH, LOW COMEDY

A SILLY SEASON REFLECTION BY
MTR. WENDY TELFER

The performance of liturgy is serious business... until something untoward happens, and the servers and clergy are hard-pressed not to crack up. Since I first buttoned up a cassock, I have experienced many such tests of 'control of the face'.

I was promoted to thurifer at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene shortly after my father's death. Accordingly, I dedicated my new ministry to his memory. My father, an Englishman, served in the Royal Navy throughout the Second World War, and retained his sailor's salty tongue. At St. Mary's, the high altar is in the centre of the sanctuary, flanked on both narrow sides by three tall metal candlesticks. Throughout the Prayer of Consecration, the thurifer and acolytes kneel at the north side of the altar. During one High Mass, as I was censing away at a major elevation, the thurible collided with one of the candlesticks, making an impressive clanging noise. The acolyte beside me whispered, "Good shot!" I heard my father's voice in my head uttering one of his favourite expressions: "Clumsy b*gg*r aren't you!?"

Despite this resounding (pun intened) gaffe, I eventually became a Master of Ceremonies. My début was on Good Friday. As my first grade teacher noted, I thrive on challenges. Everything went smoothly until we processed to the Altar of Repose to collect the Blessed Sacrament. The Deacon put the key in the tabernacle lock, and it refused to budge. After a couple of tries, he turned and gazed at me imploringly. I joined him, and with as much reverence as I could muster, tried to open the door, without success. One of the acolytes came to our aid, and had the same bad luck. Finally the Celebrant arrived, looking none too pleased, and with a sharp and authoritative turn of the key, opened the tabernacle.

A few years later I was made a Subdeacon. The ceremony took place at High Mass. I entered in cassock, amice and alb, and was clothed by my best friend, who was Deacon that day. Although we were both nervous, we put the tunic on me properly, or so we thought. The Celebrant noticed that it was on backwards. We corrected the error, treating the congregation to the spectacle of a red-faced priest dressing, undressing and redressing a blushing Subdeacon.

Ordination has not rendered me immune from embarrassing incidents. On my arrival in Gaspé, the president of the local seniors' group invited me to become a member. I was rather taken aback by the assumption that I was at least sixty-five. The gentleman read my thoughts, and assured me that the minimum age was fifty. I joined the 'Recycled Teenagers', as we called ourselves. Our winter activities included snowshoeing on the trails of the Cégep's forestry school. On my initial outing, the first time I had snowshoed since I was a real teenager, I discovered that my ability was intact, until I descended the first hill. In an instant, I was flat on my backside, looking up at my parishioners, who were making a heroic effort to maintain their poker faces. This was clearly a test for the new minister. My response was to give into my own amusement and burst out laughing. My companions joined in, and then I asked them to lift me up.

Here at St John's, the merriment continues. I have become accustomed to speaking and singing, in English, over the music that wafts into our church during festival season. During *les Francofolies* this year, I had my first experience saying Mass in French to musical accompaniment. I began speaking more loudly. My next task was to block out the sound, as I enjoy

francophone music and feared I would recognize the song and be distracted. Happily, this strategy worked!

After Mass, my guest who had joined us for worship said that he found the outdoor artist's performance of Bon Jovi's *Livin' On A Prayer* quite fitting!

Wendy +



SERIOUS WHEN OCCURRED - FUNNY NOW

By FR. EZRA PICKUP

I was ordained to the priesthood on 18 February 1961 at Christ Church, Montpelier, Vermont. Fr. Hertzler preached. The Bishop assigned me to be the curate at Christ Church.

I found it quite pleasurable to work with the Rector, Fr. Anderson, who showed all aspects of running a parish. So when he decided to take a summer vacation that year mountain climbing in the Rockies, I felt fairly confident that I could handle anything that might come up.

What happened that made me wipe the scales off my eyes was a series of funerals, the likes of which I could never have dreamed up. They seemed serious at the time, but in retrospect they are humorous.

On the Saturday afternoon following the Rector's leaving, I received a call from a local mortician. He informed me that a local doctor, who had been a friend of Fr. Anderson, had died. Previously, Fr. Anderson had promised him that upon his passing when the time came, he would conduct his funeral service.

In the Rector's absence, I could not refuse to conduct the burial; so we set that date and time. About a half hour later, the funeral director called me and asked me to help dress the body, explaining that he was short staffed on this weekend. The man's legs were bloated making it difficult for the mortician to pull his pants up.

The next Tuesday at two, the funeral was held, attended by several hundred physicians in Vermont. Just as I started down the aisle reading "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord..." someone let out a blood curdling scream! Immediately, I stopped. Ten or so doctors were carrying the person out to the Parish Hall. I excused myself to be at hand in case I had to minister to the victim. It turned out that a parishioner had a grand malseizure, which the doctors were able to treat. So I returned and resumed the burial, which went well outwardly. The committal went without incident. However, I was very thankful that Anglican priests wear vestments, which covered my shaking knees.

Two days later, one of our parishioners, an older lady died. A couple of weeks before her death, she and her husband had separated. No papers had been drawn up yet, so the husband had the right to ask to have her interred in the





**Christ Church, Montpelier, Vermont
(Photo by J. Phelan)**

burial plot that they recently bought, and had erected a monument, in the new section of the cemetery at Waitsfield. Their grown children all had different religions and wanted all kinds of services, wakes, and vigils. However, they all finally agreed that their mother deserved a Solemn High Funeral Mass. The funeral took place that Saturday morning. Following the service we all drove out to the cemetery for the committal. At the committal, just as I

was saying, “We commit her body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust...”, the sandy loam in which the grave was dug gave way, and I found myself descending into her grave feet first! But I was so busy trying not to flub up the committal that I was almost out of sight by the time I finished. My feet were in the cement vault. But somehow we got through it all.

The following Monday her will was read at probate court. In it she clearly stated that she wanted to be buried in her parents’ plot in a cemetery in the town of Vernon, Vermont (which borders Massachusetts and New Hampshire). On Tuesday morning, the family and I were following behind a flatbed truck carrying the concrete vault containing the coffin with the lady’s body to the little cemetery she wished to be interred in for her eternal rest.

The following day, I received a call from the family of a member of the parish (whom I actually knew) who had died suddenly. She was fifty-seven. She left an eighty-six year old husband. Although the couple attended Christ Church, Montpelier, they actually lived in Waits River, Vermont. The family asked me if it would be possible to hold the funeral in the Methodist church in Waits River. I figured that would be a good

arrangement, realizing that she and her husband were the only family members who were Episcopalian. I went down to see the family and share in their grief. Saturday, the day of the funeral, I brought down a hundred prayer books and hymnals for the family and friends to use for the funeral service.

As I was following the pall bearers into the church, I realised why they did not normally hold funerals there. The steps were so steep, that it was like climbing up a ladder carrying a coffin to reach the church. As we were ascending to the church I could hear the body crumpling toward the bottom of the coffin. When they got the coffin to the front of the church, they opened it and straightened out the body and intended to leave it open for the service. I went to the back and told the funeral director that during the burial service, the coffin was to be closed and covered with a pall, which I presented to him.

After the service, the mortician came up front, folded the pall, gave it back to me, opened the coffin, and went to the back of the church. There followed a hushed silence for several minutes, brought to an end when the mortician, in a hoarse whisper from the back of the church, said, “You are supposed to kiss the body first”. I figured I had better follow orders.

During the last week of being in charge, I opened a notice from the insurance company that their inspectors believed that the masonry holding the spire needed complete replacing. They mentioned the possibility of fatalities. So I informed the Wardens. We called a special parish meeting to present the problem. The parish by unanimous vote, decided to remove the spire.

When the Rector arrived back to the now spireless church, I told him that the parish by unanimous vote, backed the wardens, to 'unspire' Christ Church.

Looking back, I thank goodness that the cell phone had not been invented at that time, or the Rector would have had a miserable few days off before returning to 'unspire' his church!

Ezra +



JAZZ MASS AT ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST (2016 & 2017)



Exhibition



Sonia Indelicato Roseval *The Enigma of Jazz*

Red Roof Church
137 President Kennedy Avenue
Place des Arts, Montreal

from 22 June, to 11 July, 2018
24, 25, 26 June 2018 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
1 July 2018 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2 July 2018 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
and visits by appointment



Commissaire invité
Prof. Norman Cornett
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L'ÉGLISE AU TOIT ROUGE
THE RED ROOF CHURCH
redroof.ca

Artwork by Zoe Stopyk

JAZZ MASS

01-07-18
10h30

Avec / With
Ron Di Lauro

Collaboration:
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