

AVE

CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
145 WEST 46TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10036-8591

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
New York, NY
Permit No. 3330

Volume LXX, Number 5

September–October AD 2001

AVE

*A Bulletin of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin
in the City of New York*



THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
145 West Forty-Sixth Street, New York City

*The church is open Sunday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM,
Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM,
and Saturday from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM.*

WORSHIP

The Holy Eucharist

On Sunday, Mass is said at 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. At 10:00 AM, Sung Mass is offered. At 11:00 AM, Solemn Mass is offered. Monday through Friday, Mass is said at 12:15 PM and 6:20 PM. On Saturday, Mass is said at 12:15 PM.

The Daily Office

On Sunday, Morning Prayer is said at 8:30 AM and Evening Prayer at 4:45 PM. Monday through Friday, Morning Prayer is said at 8:30 AM, the Noontday Office at 12:00 noon, and Evening Prayer at 6:00 PM. On Saturday, the Noontday Office is said at 12:00 noon and Evening Prayer at 5:00 PM.

The Reconciliation of Penitents

Confessions are heard on Saturdays from 11:30 AM to 12:00 noon and from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM, and by appointment at other times.

DIRECTORY

The Parish Office

The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM.
Telephone: 212-869-5830 Facsimile: 212-869-7039
Worldwide Website: www.stmvirgin.org E-mail: info@stmvirgin.org

The Parish Clergy

The Reverend Stephen Gerth, *rector*,
The Reverend Allen Shin, The Reverend Matthew Weiler, *curates*,
The Reverend Thomas Breidenthal, *assistant*,
The Reverend Arthur Wolsoncroft, The Reverend Canon Maurice Garrison,
The Reverend Amilcar Figueroa, The Reverend Rosemari G. Sullivan,
The Reverend James Ross Smith, *assisting priests*,
The Reverend Canon Edgar F. Wells, *rector emeritus*.

The Board of Trustees

Mr. George Blackshire, Miss Linda Bridges, Mr. Howard Christian,
Mr. James Dennis, *vice president*, The Reverend Stephen Gerth, *president*,
Mr. David Gillespie, Mrs. Barbara Klett, *treasurer*, Mr. Robin Landis,
Mr. Terrance O'Dwyer, Mr. Fred Peelen, Dr. Leroy Sharer, *secretary*.

A Bulletin of
THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN
New York City

Volume LXX, Number 5

September–October AD 2001

August 1, 2001

Dear Friends in Christ,

There is energy and passion for the Gospel at Saint Mary's this summer. A good measure of the energy was already here, but the arrival of a new curate, a new musician, and new household staff members, and the physical renewal of several parts of our complex have brought renewed levels of activity and excitement to our common life.

Father Allen Shin jokes and laughs with me about the future. Most readers of AVE know that he and his wife, Clara Mun, will be moving to Oxford, England, in September so that he can begin doctoral studies in patristics. Father will be a student at Oriel College.

Father Matthew Weiler, a recent graduate of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, joined our staff on Monday, July 16. As I write, he is still a commuter from New Haven, since the renovation of an apartment in the Parish House for him and his wife, Janna Weiler, is not yet completed. Father Weiler comes to us from the Diocese of Central Florida, where he was ordained deacon on May 26. His ordination to the priesthood, if all the necessary and ordinary permissions are received in due course, is scheduled for Friday evening, November 30, the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle. More immediately, I hope he and Janna will be in their apartment before the Assumption. It is a lot of fun for me and Father Shin to have a new colleague—and one who takes the gentle hazing that older clerics pull on new ones with such good humor.

Robert McCormick, our organist and music director, is having altogether too much fun making music at Saint Mary's. We are looking forward very much to his first recital, which will take place before the Solemn Mass on August 15. He is a fine young musician, and the parish community is so excited about how he and Saint Mary's will grow together. Robert and Father Weiler bring youth, talent, and genuine gifts for parish work to their new positions.

Some readers may not know that my office and the office of the parish secretary, Eileen Sorenson, are on the south gallery above Saint Joseph's Hall. A wall of windows opens to the hall. All summer we have been watching the work of renovation. We will hold the reception after the Solemn Mass on the Assumption in the hall.

The painting and decoration of the hall have been coordinated by a member of the parish, Thomas Jayne, who last summer planned and oversaw the refurbishing of the reception rooms of the Rectory. The work is being undertaken with a care and attention to detail that are unusual. And despite the reality of "dollar considerations"—and there are always dollar considerations at Saint Mary's—the hall now looks as if it belongs to the beautiful church in

which we worship, which bespeaks not only the gifts but also the love of the Church which Mr. Jayne brings to his work. When the sliding doors open at the end of Mass, it will not be just our words that invite the parish community to fellowship in the hall but the hall itself.

ON Michaelmas, Saturday, September 29, at 11:00 AM, the Right Reverend Mark S. Sisk will be installed as bishop of New York at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. On Sunday, October 21, at 3:00 PM, also at the Cathedral, the Right Reverend E. Don Taylor, vicar bishop of New York City, will celebrate his 40th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. I can tell you how much I am looking forward to these events. Bishop Sisk and Bishop Taylor, like all of our bishops, have been so very helpful to me as a new rector in this diocese. I am very sure I am not alone in being thankful for the episcopal leadership we have had here and continue to have.

The choir season begins this year on Sunday, October 7. Again this year the choir will be with us for one feast in September, Holy Cross Day, which will be observed with Procession & Solemn Mass on Friday, September 14, at 6:00 PM. Our guest preacher will be the Reverend Michael P. Basden, rector of Trinity-by-the-Cove Church in Naples, Florida. Father Basden and I both served in the Diocese of Northern Indiana. Father Basden, before moving to Indiana, was curate to Father, now Bishop, Christopher Epting in Cocoa Beach, Florida. Bishop Epting has now moved to New York and is very much a part of our parish community when his duties as Ecumenical Officer of the Episcopal Church permit. It is a small world indeed. Trinity Church, Naples, is a large and growing parish. Father shares with me a particular interest in how the Church can bring good news to the unbaptized, especially unbaptized adults, and bring them into the household of faith.

Several special guests are scheduled to be with us in November and December. At the risk of getting ahead of ourselves, the guests and the days are so special that I think some of our wider parish community may want to know about them well in advance. On All Saints' Day, Thursday evening, November 1, the Right Reverend Mark S. Sisk, Bishop of New York, will be with us for the first time as diocesan bishop. On All Souls' Day, Friday evening, November 2, the Right Reverend C. Christopher Epting will be with us for the Solemn Mass. On Friday evening, November 30, the Most Reverend Frank T. Griswold, presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, will ordain Matthew Weiler to the priesthood, and on Friday evening, December 7, the Eve of the Immaculate Conception, a great friend of Saint Mary's, the Reverend Alan Moses, vicar of All Saints' Church, Margaret Street, London, will be with us as preacher for the patronal feast.

I am extremely happy to be able to announce that the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin is now open on weekdays from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. The reorganization of our household staff has meant that on Monday through Friday the church no longer is closed between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM. Frankly, I look forward to the time when we can be open from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM 364 days of the year. We are the Times Square parish. And except for New Year's Eve, this church should be open as much as possible. There are always people walking by our doors, and whenever our doors are open people enter. And those who enter cannot help praying.

Yours faithfully,



Ave atque Vale

WE ALL know that it's in the nature of curates to move on; unlike the usual pattern for a Saint Mary's curate, however, Father Allen Shin is not leaving us in order to take up the rectorship of another parish. Instead, he is returning—but with a difference—to the plan he had formed when he and his wife, Clara Mun, first came to Saint Mary the Virgin five years ago.

When Father joined us in June of 1996, it was not as curate but as resident assistant. He had sought that part-time position so that he could pursue graduate studies in Hebrew and Old Testament, which he duly began at General Seminary. One thing led to another, though, and before long his other job, in Asian Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center, was taking up so much of his time—not least because of the travel that was involved, with frequent trips to the West Coast or Florida, and less frequent ones to Asia itself—that his master's thesis was put aside.

When Father Wells retired as rector at the end of 1997, and the board of trustees asked the curate, Father William Parker, to stay on as parish vicar during the interim period, the board also asked Father Shin to stay on as assistant. He agreed and proved to be a tremendous help during that often difficult time, organizing Quiet Days, handling much of the Christian Formation program, and generally being a source of calm and steadiness. By the time Father Parker (who is now the rector of Saint Bede's in Syosset, Long Island) left Saint Mary's in June 1999, Father Gerth had spent enough time with Father Shin to know he wanted him to be the next curate.

Over the ensuing two years, Father Shin has been in charge of Christian Formation, teaching some of the courses himself and arranging for his successor as assistant, Father Thomas Breidenthal, and various others to teach the remaining ones. He has also been in charge of the catechumenal program, called Journey in Faith, designed first of all to prepare catechumens for Baptism, but also to prepare those who are coming from other Christian traditions for Confirmation or Reception. Father Shin and the laity who have participated in these courses concur that they have indeed been wonderful journeys together, in which people of widely differing backgrounds have found themselves able to talk freely about the paths that led them to God, and then led them to desire to worship Him in the richness of the Anglo-Catholic tradition. (Father Shin has much to say on all of this in his own essay on Christian Formation, which follows this one.)

When not in the classroom, Father Shin was often to be found at his computer, organizing the schedules of lectors and altar servers for Solemn Mass and for the new 10 AM Sung Mass. Father Shin's work with the servers has been a source of particular joy to him. He has watched this team—which includes some longtime Saint Marians, pre-dating Father Wells's rectorate; some newcomers, who have joined during Father Gerth's rectorate; and some from the whole range in between—develop into “a real community,” as he puts it, “like a monastic community, a Benedictine community,” within and connected to the wider parish community. He likens the sacristy to a restaurant kitchen—it's behind the scenes, but “the mood of the sacristy, the level of preparation, the professionalism, the attitude—it all affects the rest of the parish in a way that nobody realizes.” And at present the mood is good indeed. All the servers, Father happily reports, no matter what their role in the Mass that particular week—torch, crucifer, thurifer, MC, subdeacon—work extremely hard and take great pains

so that the Mass may seem to flow effortlessly. “They have fun at what they do,” he says, “and they also take it very seriously. That’s the best combination.”

SATISFYING as all this work has been, however, Father Shin still felt the pull of scholarship. We have Father Breidenthal to thank/blame for encouraging him to complete his Master’s of Sacred Theology. Father Shin completed his thesis, *New Covenant: A literary and canonical study of Jeremiah 31:31-34*, this past spring and received his STM degree from General Seminary in May.

Completing his STM was a fulfillment—but also the opening of another door, as Father Shin realized that further study might be an important part of his vocation. By now, though, with five years of parish work under his belt, his interests had shifted from his initial graduate studies. He has been heard to wonder whether the heretics in Church history are all truly heretical. It’s sometimes difficult, he has pointed out, to know what they actually taught, since the histories are written by the victors. One of these people was Nestorius of Antioch, accused of heresy by Cyril of Alexandria and excommunicated at the Council of Ephesus. The idea of delving into what Nestorius actually taught took hold of Father Shin; it was, again, Father Breidenthal who suggested Oxford, where he received his own D.Phil. a decade ago. With the help of Father Breidenthal and of Father Peter Groves—one of the many fine English seminarians who spent a season at Saint Mary’s during Father Wells’s tenure, and now teaches at St. Cross College in Oxford—Father Shin made contact with Mark Edwards, who teaches theology at Christ Church. The drill at Oxford is that you first find a professor who is willing to be your supervisor before you apply to a particular college. Father Shin had an appointment to talk with Dr. Edwards for 15 minutes; after an hour of conversation, Father and Clara were bound for Oxford.

As Father Shin explains it, Nestorius is of special interest because his brand of Christianity didn’t fade away upon being labeled heretical; it became the Nestorian Church, which spread from its native Syria into Persia, and thence to China and India, and even (though less strongly) as far as Korea. It has been accused of “syncretism”—an inappropriate grafting of Christianity onto incompatible local beliefs, as opposed to “synthesis,” in which a local accent is used but without any essential change of doctrine. One striking example of the Nestorian Church’s adaptation to other climes, Father Shin relates, is the symbol of the Cross with a lotus blossom at its center. Is that the Buddhizing of Christianity, or is it the use of a resonant local symbol (among other things, the lotus blossom is the symbol of rebirth and new life) to bring a non-Western people into the mystery of Jesus’ death and resurrection? That is one of the many questions Father expects to explore. “I guess it will mean learning Syriac,” he says—no hardship to someone whose repertory already includes ancient Hebrew.

Father has no doubt that this is the right thing for him to do at this time, and he and Clara are greatly looking forward to living in that city so steeped in learning and beauty—and especially to being where modern Anglo-Catholicism started, Oriel College. At the same time, Father says, “Part of me feels that I wish I could stay several more years at Saint Mary’s to see through this transition.” He believes that Father Gerth’s emphasis on Baptism not only is right in and of itself, but is just what Saint Mary’s needed, both for her own life as a Christian community and as showing the way to the wider Church.

The building up of Saint Mary’s as a community that experiences itself as the Body of Christ is something that Father Shin senses very strongly now, but it will be Father Weiler, with his predecessor’s blessing, who will get to lead the next Journey in Faith. —Linda Bridges

Christian Formation: Spiritual or Theological?

EVERY January, third-year seminarians aspiring to be priests in the Episcopal Church have to take a four-day-long exam called the General Ordination Examinations (GOEs). While much of my experience of taking these exams is a blur to me by now, there was one short-answer question that has remained with me to this day. The question asked us to define spirituality and theology and explain the difference between them. My immediate reaction was, How can one do theology without being spiritual? How can a spiritual person not do theology? I don’t remember specifically how I answered the question. All I recall is that I gave some vague answer and was not satisfied with it. (I don’t think the examiners were quite satisfied with it either.) I still struggle with this issue when I design or teach a Christian Formation program. I try to take care not to make it too cerebral or too experiential, but to keep it intellectually challenging and inspiring at the same time. At the heart of my concern is the issue of how spirituality and theology are connected to each other and how we enter into the dialogue between them.

On August 19 a program on PBS called *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly* ran a segment on the charismatic movement. The movement apparently claims 20 million Christians of all denominations in the United States and 540 million worldwide. At the heart of it is the importance of religious or spiritual experience expressed in some form of emotional ecstasy. The movement has been criticized for its lack of doctrinal teaching and for questionable practices such as speaking in tongues. Despite a sense of discomfort with the “holy rollers” on TV, I could not help agreeing on some level with the importance of experience in one’s religious or spiritual life. However, I remain skeptical about any kind of ecstatic frenzy which is solely experiential and is divorced from the more sober teaching of the Apostolic Faith. Even Thomas Merton, in *New Seeds of Contemplation*, defines faith as “primarily an intellectual assent.” At some point the leaders in Christian Formation today—both clergy and laity—must deal with this issue of how the spiritual experience and the theological inquiry can be combined to enrich our faith.

Mark McIntosh, an Episcopal priest who teaches at Loyola University in Chicago, has written a book called *Mystical Theology*. I wish that this book had been available when I was in seminary. McIntosh points out that “Theology without spirituality becomes ever more methodologically refined but unable to know or speak of the very mysteries at the heart of Christianity, and spirituality without theology becomes rootless, easily hijacked by individualistic consumerism.” He proposes a definition of spirituality as “the new and transformative pattern of life and thought engendered in people by their encounter with God,” and he suggests that in early Christianity such a transformation was put into effect in a new communal matrix, the Church. He then describes the natural relationship between spirituality and theology: “Spirituality is the *impression* that encounter has in the continual transformation of the members of the church; theology is the *expression* of that encounter in the attempt to understand and tell something true of the mystery whom the believing community encounters.” Spirituality keeps theology honest and transparent in its expression; theology keeps spirituality rooted and grounded in the community of the faithful. In considering McIntosh’s book, I am reminded of two very important aspects of Christian life in developing a program for Christian Formation—mystery and a new paradigm of life.

What is mystery? An eight-year-old boy nonchalantly responds, “It’s something that the more you know the more it makes you want to know.” This is one of the many stories Rebekah



Photo by Alice V. Manning

The sacred ministers preparing to receive the gifts on the Feast of the Assumption

Rojcewicz tells about children during the training sessions of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. No learned scholar could have said it any more beautifully or more to the point. In his heart this child already knows what his relationship with God is like. Whence did he get such an insight? Although he might have had an innate capacity for such wisdom from birth, the ability to know it in his heart and to articulate it is a formation issue. Whether he will remember it or whether he will lose it as he grows up will depend upon his ability to keep connecting this deep insight with his experiences in life. This ability, again, is really a skill that is developed and nurtured through formation. And Christian Formation, in turn, is largely a process of developing and nurturing such a skill—the skill to engage life’s mysteries.

Louis Weil, who teaches liturgics at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, spoke to this issue at a liturgy conference I attended a couple of years ago. He said: “The Christian paradigm is death and resurrection.” Everything we do as Christians, whether it be in liturgy or in daily life, is indeed about living into this paradigm of life and death and life again. But in what is this paradigm of life rooted and how does a Christian begin such a life? The answer is: Baptism. We in the Episcopal Church, through the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, have rediscovered the centrality of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. I think that that is a work half done. We still need to rediscover the centrality of the Sacrament of Baptism and, more importantly, its inseparable union with the Eucharist. Aidan Kavanagh has insisted that Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are in effect one ritual act in the Easter Vigil. Baptism is not just an initiation ceremony, by which one is privileged to receive Communion and to join an exclusive community. Baptism is precisely what McIntosh calls “the new and transformative pattern of life”—death and resurrection. When we as Christians no longer think of Baptism apart from Eucharist or of Eucharist apart from Baptism, we are ready to live out our true mission in life, what McIntosh calls “living into the adventure of incarnation.” Before we even begin to talk about the priesthood of all the baptized, the authority of the laity, and the servanthood of the ordained, we need to come to a deeper understanding of Baptism and Eucharist, and the implications for the ordering of our common life.

THIS is a lofty goal for a few sessions of Christian Formation. In fact, it is a life-long spiritual and theological process. With such a vision in mind, however, we can see the main focus of the coming year’s Christian Formation program at Saint Mary’s. (Except as noted, these classes are taught on Wednesday evenings, after the 6:20 Mass.) During the weeks after the Epiphany, Father Richard Corney, retired professor of Old Testament studies at General Seminary, will lead a series examining the Old Testament lessons read at the Easter Vigil. The series will explore how these lessons are understood as passages from the Old Testament and how that understanding might be consistent with or different from our understanding of them in the Easter Vigil context. Next will come the Lenten series, led by Father Gerth. This series, “Into the Mystery of Baptism,” will discuss Baptism in the liturgical context and as a new pattern of Christian life. This will be followed by an Eastertide series examining Baptism in the New Testament. Finally, Father Thomas Breidenthal will lead a series on the moral implications of living a Christian life centered and rooted in Baptism and Eucharist.

Not every series will focus so closely on Baptism. The first series this fall, beginning on September 19, will be “The Prodigal Son.” As the parish gears up for Dedication Sunday on October 7, Father Breidenthal will lead the class in exploring different ways this passage from Luke can be read and applied in life. Then Father Breidenthal will lead a new installment of one of the most popular series from last year, “Shakespeare as Theologian.” Mr. John Beddingfield will lead a short series called “Saints Alive,” exploring how we define sainthood, whom we count as saints, and how we live in the communion of saints. During Advent, Father Breidenthal will lead a series on “Christian Faith and Decision Making,” which will discuss some basic approaches and tools for thinking through moral issues in the context of Christian faith. In June 2002, Father Matthew Weiler, the new curate at Saint Mary’s, will lead a series on “Prayers from the Bible,” which will look at various forms of prayers in the Bible and discuss how they might help our own prayer life.

Other classes and activities are scheduled for those who find Wednesday evenings inconvenient. One Saturday a month there will be some kind of Christian Formation event. The schedule includes the Advent Quiet Day, led by Bishop Christopher Epting, and the Lenten Quiet Day, led by Mother Rosemary Sullivan. In November, our new organist and music director, Mr. Robert McCormick, will lead an afternoon session on the music in liturgy, which will include a sing-along. On the second Thursday of each month, a new Women’s Spirituality group will be led by Miss Jenni Reddall, our seminarian, and Mother Sullivan. On the third Thursday of each month, Father Weiler will organize an event for our 20s and 30s network.

I certainly do not claim that the Christian Formation program at Saint Mary’s is the only or the best way for us to be formed as Christians. It is, however, an honest attempt to keep our talking and thinking about God truthful and transparent. Our program seeks to nurture spiritual experience grounded in the living tradition of the Church. I can only hope that, at least at Saint Mary’s, when one experiences ecstasy it is not an escape from the realities of life but rather a real and concrete movement into the Trinitarian life of God. —Allen Shin

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AVE

received with thanksgiving

Please make checks payable to the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin.

Anonymous, \$20; the Rev. Canon J. C. Cairns, \$10; C. Lloyd Tyler, \$30; Thomas Glenn, \$50; John A. Gable, \$25; Carol Pepper, \$25; and the Rev. Canon George H. Bowen, \$50.

Reminder to our Canadian friends: Our bank will accept only international bank drafts denominated in U.S. dollars, or checks drawn in U.S. dollars on an American bank or the American branch of a Canadian bank.

REMEMBER SAINT MARY’S IN YOUR WILL

Bequests may be made in the following form:

I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to the Society of the Free Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, and having its principal office at 145 West 46th Street, New York City, [here state the nature or amount of the gift].

Highest Standards

AS I began to collect materials to share with our new curate I came across copies of articles written by former professors of mine on how to preside at Mass. One was co-authored by the Reverend James E. Griffiss and the Reverend Louis Weil; the second was written entirely by Father Weil.

Father Griffiss and Father Weil both taught at Nashotah House when I was a seminarian there. They had both been on the faculty of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Caribbean before coming to the House. Father Griffiss had served as an assistant at Saint Mary's under Father Taber and at the beginning of Father Garfield's rectorate. Father Weil had attended Saint Mary's while a student at the General Theological Seminary. Both were formed for the priesthood in the Anglo-catholic tradition. Both knew Fathers Taber and Garfield, and of course they know my immediate predecessor, Father Wells.

The joint article has no date on it, but from the content one knows it was written in the days of the old Prayer Book and before the Vatican II reforms of the Western Rite. The detail surely drove some people nuts, but at its best it bespeaks the kind of reverence with which priests in the Anglo-catholic tradition approached the altar in that era. I quote from one of the first sections on "Vesting":

After having washed the hands, the Celebrant, dressed in cassock, places the upper edge of the amice across the top of the head, crosses the cords over the chest, draws them around the back and ties them in front at the waist.

He then puts on the alb, right arm then left, and ties the girdle around the waist, knotting it in front. He then pulls the alb straight and arranges the excess material evenly to the sides and back. He kisses the maniple and places it on the left arm toward the elbow. After kissing the stole he places it around the neck (being careful that it is not twisted or crooked), crosses it in the front, right hand over left, making sure that it hangs evenly. He takes the girdle and makes two loops to hold the stole in its place.

This is how I was taught to vest, and aside from not wearing a maniple (a band of cloth worn by priests before the liturgical reforms of the 1960s) and wearing the stole hanging down in front (not crossed), this is the way in which I vest for Mass every time I go to the altar.

Frankly, it is hard for me to read this article all the way through. It takes concentration to follow the details. I confess that I have referred to it from time to time to understand the newer rites. The earlier rites were those that the revisers knew and out of which the revisions came. There is a certain finesse to the old rites that I suspect the revisers took for granted. There are small ceremonial details, of concern only to a priest, that add a measure of grace to the presider's role but are otherwise unimportant. Examples of this are a consistent pattern for holding the hands and a pattern for making turns towards and away from the assembly.

The second article was written in 1985, as a guide for priests at Nashotah House. Nashotah House was and is a community of daily worship, and during the 1970s there was little turnover among the faculty. Of the new Prayer Book, issued in 1979, Father Weil writes, "Here at Nashotah House, the implementation of the new rites in the context of a community characterized by its daily liturgical life led to the unfolding of a common liturgical style

among members of the faculty." By 1985 new faculty had arrived who were unfamiliar with what had taken place, and this article was designed to fill in the background for them. Father Weil wrote:

Here in the seminary community, the view may be legitimately put forward that there is no need for the priests to celebrate in an identical fashion, and certainly no one would suggest that we should go through a kind of liturgical drill like a group of automatons. Natural variety will result from human and personal differences, and this is legitimate both here and throughout the Church.

Yet this does not mean that criteria do not exist by which a basic norm may be established, a norm which we would want to foster in the parishes and missions of the Church as our students go out to pastoral ministry. This implies that ritual differences should be minimal, and that our liturgical norms should be based upon the highest standard of theological and liturgical knowledge available to us . . . The abysmal state of parochial worship, to which innumerable commentators bear witness, attests to the pastoral crisis and confusion of the laity to which a lack of appropriate norms has led. Nashotah is looked to by a great number of clergy and laity as a place where the liturgy is celebrated with preparation and sensitive reflection. The general pastoral implementation of the new BCP . . . requires leadership in this area . . .

Some members of Saint Mary's may not realize how many members of the clergy, as well as laypersons, throughout the Church worship here when they visit New York. What Father Weil wrote about Nashotah House in 1985 could also have been said of Saint Mary's at many points in its history. The Church needs great centers of worship where the liturgy is celebrated with "preparation and sensitive reflection." Of course, this should be an authentic articulation of the common life of a community being shaped by the norms of the Gospel. Saint Mary's is a place where decisions about worship should be based upon "the highest standard of theological and liturgical knowledge available to us." I think it is fair to say that a great deal about our common life is based precisely on this standard, and I believe that our understanding of "the highest standard" will continue to unfold if we are purposeful about our mission to live out our lives as catholic Christians in the Episcopal Church.

THIS fall the parish clergy and I are going to look with a critical eye at what we do when we worship. I want everything we do to be the very best it can be. I know, for example, that there are some minor ceremonial practices I have carried over from the older rites that should probably go—for example, for the liturgically curious, I like traditional double swings for the Gospel book, not single swings as are now recommended. I also know I will need to provide convincing leadership for the clergy and laity who serve the assembly at the altar about why all of us should be doing things the same basic way in the sanctuary.

Behind all of this, my concern is much more than a desire to be "correct"—something that is of obsessive concern in older liturgical manuals. My concern is different: I want to be a part of the renewal of an evangelical liturgical Christian community. I want to see if it is possible for traditional urban liturgical Christianity again to convert the unbaptized. Successful parish models of an aesthetic liturgical Christianity can be found, but I know of no community like ours in the Episcopal Church where the life of the community centers on helping the unbaptized to die and rise in Christ. I believe Aidan Kavanagh, retired professor of theology at Yale Divinity School, was absolutely correct in asserting that the best way for the

baptized to live out the Baptismal Covenant is to be constantly involved in the conversion of those whom Christ is calling to the font.

I also am very, very much aware that clergy tend to copy practices they admire for whatever reason in another congregation. Saint Mary's should be a model of the very best kind of Christian community, not only for ourselves but as a witness to liturgical Christian life for the wider Church. What we do here matters.

MANY of you know I had never visited Saint Mary's before I was interviewed to be rector here. But I did read AVE. I was rector of a small Midwestern parish with an Anglo-catholic heritage. Like Saint Mary's we gathered on the great feasts of the Church year to celebrate the Eucharist. It was often the only parish in the diocese that had a full service for Candlemas and one of a very few that celebrated the Ascension or Holy Cross Day. Reading AVE from afar for many years was important to me and I'm sure to other Anglo-catholic rectors and parish communities. We weren't alone in our common life.

The importance of parishes like ours for the wider Church should not be understated or overstated. But I do know that the problem of liturgical formation for clergy and laity will be with us for years to come. Liturgical formation is not what it ought to be in the Church today. Seminarians throughout the Episcopal Church can declaim on the question of whether the response of the congregation at the beginning of Mass should be "And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever," instead of "And blessed be his kingdom," but I have yet to meet a recent seminary graduate who knew anything about evangelism in the liturgical tradition or how the Liturgy of the Palms came to be attached to the Mass of the Sunday of the Passion. I remember being astonished when I met seminarians from Nashotah House in recent years who knew nothing of the adult catechumenate (the process in the liturgical tradition of preparing adults for baptism).

There need to be some places that get it right. I think Saint Mary's can be and should be a place where people look for a liturgical excellence of our own time. Many newcomers to Saint Mary's will probably not notice some of the changes because no one is teaching them, for example, that the precise number of swings of the thurible is a matter they ought to notice. Incense is a sign of honor, reverence, and prayer. That's the point. Frankly, I will teach our new curate to worry about things at the altar that I don't think altar servers, much less members of the assembly, should ever, ever be concerned about—e.g., how a priest wipes his fingers on the a corporal after touching the consecrated Bread.

I write today about this subject to the local and wider parish communities to let you know what is coming and to let you know that I seek to explore and study on my own those who are the successors to Aidan Kavanagh, now retired, and to Louis Weil, regarded by many as the senior liturgical scholar of our church. (Looking ahead: Father Weil is scheduled to be with us in the spring for Annunciation.)

This is the natural evolution of Saint Mary's role, the role it had in the beginning and has today: to witness to the living tradition of catholic Christianity within the Episcopal Church. Saint Mary's has been a place of liturgical change and ferment in almost every decade of its life. The change I seek to lead is change that is natural to our tradition. Again, I do believe our parish community is called to be for itself and for the wider Church a model of the very best thinking about living the Gospel as a catholic Christian community.

—Stephen Gerth



THE CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER



- 1 Sa David Oakerhater, deacon
- 2 Su **THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
- 3 M Labor Day (Federal holiday: one Mass only, at 12:15 PM)
- 4 Tu Weekday
- 5 W Weekday
- 6 Th Weekday
- 7 F Weekday
- 8 Sa **The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary** *Abstinence*
- 9 Su **THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
- 10 M Weekday
- 11 Tu Weekday
- 12 W John Henry Hobart, *bishop*
- 13 Th Cyprian, *bishop & martyr*
EVE OF HOLY CROSS DAY (6:00 PM)
- 14 F **HOLY CROSS DAY** *Abstinence*
PROCESSION & SOLEMN MASS 6:00 PM
Mass ordinary: *Missa Della Battaglia*, Giovanni Francesco Anerio (1568–1630)
Motet: "Christus factus est," Felice Anerio (1560–1614)
- 15 Sa Of Our Lady
- 16 Su **THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
- 17 M Weekday



The Rector with Curate, outgoing, and Curate, incoming, on a Sunday in August

Photo by Alice V. Manning

18 Tu Edward Bouverie Pusey, *priest*
 19 W Ember Day
 20 Th John Patteson, *bishop*, and his companions, *martyrs*
 EVE OF SAINT MATTHEW'S DAY (6:00 PM)
 21 F **Saint Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist** *Abstinence*
 22 Sa Ember Day

23 SU **THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
 24 M Weekday
 25 Tu Sergius, *abbot*
 26 W Lancelot Andrewes, *bishop*
 27 Th Vincent de Paul, *priest*
 28 F Weekday *Abstinence*
 EVE OF MICHAELMAS (SUNG MASS 6:00 PM)
 29 Sa **Saint Michael & All Angels**

30 SU **THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

17 W Ignatius, *bishop & martyr*
 EVE OF SAINT LUKE'S DAY (6:00 PM)
 18 Th **Saint Luke the Evangelist**
 19 F Henry Martyn, *priest* *Abstinence*
 20 Sa Of Our Lady

21 SU **THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
 Mass ordinary: *Missa "Ich segge adieu,"* Johann de Fossa (15??–1603)
 Motet: "*Ave verum corpus,*" William Byrd (1543–1623)
 22 M Weekday
 EVE OF SAINT JAMES'S DAY (6:00 PM)
 23 Tu **Saint James of Jerusalem**
 24 W Weekday
 25 Th Weekday
 26 F Alfred the Great, *king* *Abstinence*
 27 Sa Of Our Lady

28 SU **THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
 Mass ordinary: Communion Service in E, Harold Darke (1888–1976)
 Anthem: "O how amiable," Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)
 29 M **Saint Simon & Saint Jude, Apostles** (tr.)
 30 Tu Weekday
 31 W Weekday



THE CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER



1 M Remigius, *bishop*
 2 Tu Weekday
 3 W Weekday
 4 Th Francis of Assisi, *friar*
 5 F Weekday *Abstinence*
 6 Sa William Tyndale, *priest*

7 SU **DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH**
 PROCESSION & SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM
 Mass ordinary: *Missa "Iste confessor,"* G. P. da Palestrina (1525–1594)
 Motet: "*Locus iste,*" Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)
 8 M Columbus Day (Federal holiday: one Mass only, at 12:15 PM)
 9 Tu Robert Grosseteste, *bishop*
 10 W Weekday
 11 Th Weekday
 12 F Weekday *Abstinence*
 13 Sa Of Our Lady

14 SU **THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**
 Mass ordinary: Short Communion Service, Adrian Batten (1591–1637)
 Motet: "*Jesu dulcis memoria,*" Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548–1611)
 15 M Teresa of Avila, *monastic*
 16 Tu Weekday

Federal Holiday Schedule: On ordinary federal holidays the parish office is closed and the only public service is the 12:15 PM Mass.

Friday Abstinence: The ordinary Fridays of the year are observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial in commemoration of the crucifixion of the Lord.



Father Weiler as deacon of the Mass, John Beddingfield as subdeacon, with Bishop Epting on the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption

Photo by
 Alice V. Manning