Dear Friends in Christ,

When I begin to write a new “Dear Friends” for AVE, I pull up the computer file from the previous year. It was good for me to reread my thoughts from early August 2001. My city, my nation, and my world were a different place then. A year ago my thoughts were turned entirely to the future at Saint Mary’s. My thoughts are not much different today; I believe ultimately in God’s loving plan for us and for his world. What has changed for me is a renewed sense of the presence and reality of evil in the world. Yet, when all is said and done, you and I are a people of hope and faith. Christ does triumph over evil and death. We are thankful daily at Saint Mary’s for God’s loving providence. We continue to be thankful daily at Saint Mary’s for the sacrifices of those who serve and protect us.

For some months I have been reflecting with the clergy, staff, and various members of the parish community about what we should offer on September 11, 2002. On September 11, 2001, we went to the altar. This year we will do the same thing. The Right Reverend E. Don Taylor, Vicar Bishop for New York City, will be with us at noon that day to celebrate and preach a Solemn Requiem Mass. The parish choir will sing Tomás Luis de Victoria’s Missa pro defunctis. Black vestments will be worn.

September 11 will not be a holiday for our city. But it will be a national day of prayer and mourning. Our doors will be open. When the first plane hit, we were before the high altar, saying Morning Prayer. We will be doing the same thing this year and, by God’s mercy, on this date every year to come.

Today the parish celebrates the Feast of the Assumption. It is very hot in New York. This does not mean that the liturgy will be less glorious or full in any way. “Big flowers” are being prepared for the altar. Our parish choir has many new fine voices. Robert McCormick, our organist and music director, was thrilled with their work in their rehearsal last Sunday afternoon. They are singing Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina’s Missa “Assumpta est Maria” and his motet Alma redemptoris Mater. The other motet is Ave Virgo sanctissima by Francisco Guerrero. This is glorious music.
It is very special and rare that there is a place like Saint Mary's where some of the greatest music composed for this feast is offered liturgically on the feast. (This is among the many, many reasons I am never shy about asking for your support for Saint Mary's)

The Right Reverend C. Christopher Epting, Ecumenical Officer of the Episcopal Church, will preside. The Reverend Dr. Peter Galloway, Vicar of Emmanuel Church, West Hampstead, London, will preach. I can hardly wait.

At Saint Mary's we keep feasts on the appointed day for the feast (or a feast's proper eve), and so there will be another special Mass just after our September 11 observance. Friday, September 13, is the Eve of Holy Cross Day. This year the Choral Scholars of Princeton, New Jersey, will sing at Solemn Mass. Following the Mass, a relic of the True Cross will be offered for Veneration in the Lady Chapel.

In the Episcopal Church, the Prayer Book calendar permits the celebration of major feasts on most ordinary Sundays after the Epiphany and Pentecost. At Saint Mary's, we keep the Feast of Saint Michael and All Angels, September 29, on Sunday when the feast falls on a Sunday, as it does this year. Normally our choir season would begin on the first Sunday in October, but because Michaelmas falls on Sunday, it will begin this year on September 29. That means it is also September 29 that we will resume singing Morning Prayer on Sunday mornings at 8:30 AM and offering Solemn Evensong & Benediction on Sunday evenings at 5:00 PM.

Last spring, after we sang Morning Prayer on Palm Sunday and Easter Day, those of us who are here regularly for the Sunday morning Office did not want to quit. The extraordinary acoustics of our church building mean that six or eight people, people who do sing, can sing the Office. Others who are not natural singers find it easy to join in the simple settings. I confess I really like it. If you are ever in New York and decide you can come only to the 9:00 AM Said Mass, come thirty minutes early. You will not be disappointed.

One of the great preachers of our city will be in the pulpit for our first Evensong of the season, the Reverend Canon John G. B. Andrew, Rector Emeritus of Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue. Father has been a great friend to Saint Mary's since the early years of his ministry. Personally, he has offered advice to me as a new rector in this parish which I have found invaluable. It will be a great honor for us to welcome him to the pulpit again.

The following Sunday we have another special guest at Evensong, the Reverend Canon Carlson Gerda, Canon to the Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church. Canon Gerda was reared in New York City and was a member of the parish as a teenager. Again, we are honored by the presence of a priest who has had a particular love for Saint Mary's all his life. This parish does change the lives of people, including many members of the clergy.

Changing lives really is one way to think about the mission of Saint Mary's in Times Square. Jesus Christ lives in us and we live in him. It is he who sustains, his life that carries us through the sin, temptation, and evil of this world. It is he who is with us also to show us all that is, in the words of the Prayer Book, good, and true, and lovely. I cannot imagine a more important place for the Episcopal Church to have been and to be than alongside the crossing roads, Broadway and Seventh Avenue, that form Times Square.

I hope many of our friends throughout the country and the world will be able to worship with us again in the not too distant future. I know you support us with your prayers and your gifts. Daily your prayers and gifts matter for the witness of the Gospel. Thank you so very much.

Yours faithfully,

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Beyond Time and in the World: 
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

FOR LONG CENTURIES now the Church has declared that liturgy shapes belief. I suddenly saw what that meant this year on Trinity Sunday. Those of you who worship at Saint Mary's know the moment: near the end of Mass, the assembly sings a Solemn Te Deum. Two thurifers stand just within the rail, a symmetrical pair, swinging their thuribles rhythmically, their movement synchronized. The building soon fills with the scent of burning incense. The assembly chants the words of the ancient hymn. The moment is dramatic, intense, focused—so much so that one is tempted to say that the assembly pauses to sing the canticle, but that is not correct. The assembly doesn't interrupt its worship to sing the Te Deum. Rather, in singing the canticle, it is trying to offer an act of pure worship to the Trinity; and it suddenly seemed to me this year that the ritual was meant to create an image of the eternal praise rendered by the heavenly host to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because this was so, it felt to me that what we were doing on Trinity Sunday was praising God as God, who exists eternally as One in Three, with no immediate reference to God as he has acted for us in the history of salvation.

To be sure, there is much in the Te Deum to support that impression. There is the insistent repetition of the adjectives “eternal,” “endless,” “everlasting.” There is the paradoxical use of language to hint at language's limited ability to describe God's limitless power, beauty, and goodness: “all creation,” “all the powers of heaven,” “heaven and earth are full of your glory,” “majesty unbounded.”

However, the next day I read the Te Deum and realized that my interpretation was only partially correct, for the canticle is filled with language about the God who is known as One in Three precisely because he has acted for us in the history of salvation. It is true that in the Te Deum the angelic choir praises the Trinity, but apostles, prophets, and martyrs do so as well. Christ is the eternal Son, but he is also the one who became human to set us free. The Holy Spirit is our “advocate and guide.” Christ is Son, but he is also Our Lord, and we cry out to him, “Come then, Lord, and help your people….”

What I realized on that Trinity Monday was that the liturgy had led us to consider the mystery of the Trinity in all its complexity. What that means is what it has meant for many centuries. Christians are moved to confess that from all eternity God is One God in Three distinct Persons, while also proclaiming that God has acted in history to create, redeem, and sanctify. However, Christians have insisted that, while it is true to say that the one God creates, redeems, and sanctifies, it is preferable to speak of the individual Persons as the agents of those saving acts. Furthermore, and this is often overlooked, the Tradition insists that God's mighty acts are not “independent projects” undertaken by one or another of the divine Persons in complete isolation from the other two. On the contrary, Scripture, the Creeds, and the writings of the Fathers tell us about the ways in which the three Persons exist in relation to one another and the ways in which those Persons have acted together for our salvation. For example, in the Nicene Creed we say that the Father is “maker of heaven and earth,” but we also say that “all things were made through” the Son, who is eternally begotten of the Father; we also confess that the Spirit is “the Lord and giver of life.” A further example: Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, comes “down from heaven,” but he does not act in isolation. He is one in “being with the Father;” he “becomes incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit,” he is raised from the dead, he returns to the Father, and he sits in glory at his right hand. In short, Scripture and Tradition describe a network of relationships among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit from before time and in the history of salvation; and the liturgy for Trinity Sunday is designed to proclaim those relationships in all their complexity, in the Te Deum, and in the Collect and the proper readings.

IT SHOULD NOT be thought, of course, that this trinitarian focus is confined to the liturgy for Trinity Sunday. Far from it. After all, Trinity Sunday is a relatively late addition to the church calendar. It is worthy of note that as late as the 11th century, Pope Alexander II was still resisting the call for a separate feast, arguing that “it is not the custom in Rome to set aside a special day for honoring the . . . Trinity, since, properly speaking, [the Trinity] is honored daily in psalmody by the singing of the ‘Glory be to the Father’” (Jounel, p. 102). This medieval pope's argument is instructive, for there seems to be a distinct trinitarian element embedded within all of the Church's liturgies. One liturgist puts it this way: “The theological dynamic at work in Christian liturgical worship is deeply, profoundly trinitarian in nature” (Vogel, p. 317). Spelling out what is meant by this trinitarian dynamic would be a complex task. However, an example taken from one of the Church's core liturgies may help to illustrate how the dynamic works.

The Thanksgiving over the Water in Baptism (BCP, pp. 306-307) is a highly charged text. In it God is thanked, invoked, and praised; water is blessed, and a narrative of God's saving acts is proclaimed. Each person of the Trinity is described as performing certain actions. God
(the Father) creates water. Christ dies and rises, and baptism recapitulates his dying and rising. The Spirit gives the gift of new life in the baptismal waters. However, notice how the blessing of the water, expressed in one long sentence, also stresses the relationship among the Persons. We ask the Father to bless the water by the power of the Holy Spirit so that believers might live eternally in a life made possible by Jesus, the Risen Lord.

In short, while it may be the philosopher's task to devise proofs for the existence of God, the liturgy is not interested in such abstractions. The liturgy allows us to proclaim our faith in one God in three Persons who has acted and continues to act for our sake and for the good of all creation. Since this is true, and since the trinitarian dynamic seems to be so central an element of the liturgy, it is somewhat disquieting to note that some Anglican churches, including the Episcopal Church, have issued liturgical texts that sometimes obscure that dynamic. The Presiding Bishop, in the Preface to *Enriching Our Worship* (hereafter *EOW*), the supplemental liturgical materials prepared by the Standing Liturgical Commission, describes the motives that inspired the preparation of these texts:

*EOW* is not intended to supplant the Book of Common Prayer, but rather to provide additional resources to assist worshiping communities wishing to expand the language, images and metaphors used in worship. In some cases the canticles and prayers represent the recovery of ancient biblical and patristic images . . . and in other cases images which speak of God in other than the familiar masculine terms which have been so much a part of our liturgical prayer. Expanding our vocabulary of prayer and the ways in which we name the Holy One bear witness to the fact that the mystery of God transcends all categories of knowing, including those of masculine and feminine. *EOW*, p. 5

The background to Bishop Griswold's words is of course the often-heated discussion surrounding this project "to expand the language . . . used in worship." The liveliness of the discussion was to be expected, since it has taken place during a time when traditional gender roles have changed radically. Those changes have helped inspire the call for "inclusive" or "expansive" language in Christian worship. In her Introduction to *EOW*, Phoebe Pettingell defines the perceived problem that led the Commission to issue new texts. She also acknowledges the difficulties involved in the project:

... ears attuned to contemporary language and culture grew uncomfortable with liturgical metaphors and forms of address, inherited largely from the 18th and 19th centuries, in which God is primarily envisioned as a kind of *Paterfamilias*. However, the search for remedies has not been smooth. Both positive and negative reactions to early experiments emphasized that a substantial number of Episcopalians are most wary of language which strikes them as abstract or depersonalizing

(hence the widespread distaste for "Creator/Redeemer/Sanctifier" even among those who do not find the formulation modalist). *EOW*, p. 8

Reading this, one cannot help appreciating the Commission's conscientious and ongoing effort to struggle with the significant theological difficulties involved in this project. Furthermore, it should be said that the Commission has often succeeded admirably when introducing new materials. The canticles in *EOW* are particularly impressive. However, the Commission has been less successful in its attempts to write new eucharistic prayers. The commitment to avoiding the use of the terms "Father" and "Son" when referring to the first and second Persons of the Trinity remains problematic. As we have seen, "Father/Son language" is extremely useful in describing relationship, both within the timeless life of the Trinity and in the history of salvation. Avoiding such language produces at least two negative results. First, it means that in *EOW*’s eucharistic prayers the word "God" is reserved for the first Person of the Trinity. There is certainly nothing improper about this. For instance, 2 Cor. 13:13, one of the most powerful trinitarian passages in all of Scripture, does not refer to the first Person of the Trinity as "Father" ("The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit . . ."); and traditionally, if one addresses God in prayer, it is assumed that one is addressing the Father. However, restricting the use of the word God to those contexts in which one is speaking of or to the first Person tends to obscure the equality of the Persons, an equality which is clearly specified in a phrase like "Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Second, the use of "God," "Word," "Creator of

The Station at the Shrine of Our Lady, the Feast of the Assumption

Photo by Alice V. Manning
Of course, this "middle" place on the political spectrum is not a comfortable place

The link between the "gender neutral" and the impersonal is particularly apparent in parts of the New Zealand Prayer Book, a work that the Commission used as a source for EOW (EOW, p. 9). The book's "Liturgical Affirmation," an alternative to, though not a replacement of, the Nicene Creed, is not credal in form. The assembly tells God who he is; it does not declare what it believes—"You, O God are supreme and holy." Thus, the text erases the relationship between God and believer that the creeds were designed to express. Furthermore, the text speaks only of specific actions in the history of salvation. All mention of relationships among the Persons of the Trinity is avoided. The text is deeply impersonal. As an expression of faith it is insufficient.

As we have seen, the terms Father and Son are useful precisely because they specify a relationship between two equal Persons that is marked by mutual love and communion. In short, they point to a personal relationship, and this is profoundly important. The late Catherine Mowry LaCugna put it this way:

What matters is that we hold on to the assertion that God is personal, and that therefore the proper subject matter of the doctrine of the Trinity is the encounter between divine and human persons in the economy of redemption. [LaCugna 1991, p. 305]

If this is true, then it is not at all clear to me that the use of "Father/Son language," a language that is deeply embedded in both Scripture and the Creeds, arises from a desire to reinforce hierarchy. It may in fact be true that such language tends to work against hierarchy precisely because it points to the mutual love among the Persons of the Trinity. It may be the case that hearing "Father" as "Paterfamilias" is a modern difficulty and not a problem inherent in the word itself. This is not to suggest that misogyny is not an enduring problem in the Church. It is. However, it is to suggest that "Father/Son language" does not cause misogyny and to wonder if avoiding such language can do much to prevent it.

I am a newcomer to this community. However, I cannot help noticing that Saint Mary's occupies an unusual position vis-à-vis these issues. On the one hand, gender-neutral language in the liturgy seems not to be a priority. On the other hand, the position of women in our community has evolved to a degree that would have been unthinkable twenty-five years ago: women serve at the altar and are active in the leadership of the parish; women take an active part in all the ministries of the parish; women have recently formed a group to discuss spirituality. In the end, life at Saint Mary's would simply be a poor, drab, and diminished thing if it were not for the presence, voices, and ministries of women.

Of course, this "middle" place on the political spectrum is not a comfortable place to be. Many of us at Saint Mary's have been subjected to finger-wagging lectures during which we are told either that we are "too inclusive" or that we are "not inclusive enough." Such lectures are deeply annoying, but they may be useful as we consider our vocation in and to the wider Church. The Standing Liturgical Commission describes EOW as a work in progress and calls for dialogue. Perhaps our community will have something important to say.

—(The Reverend) James Ross Smith

References: It is somewhat ironic that the move towards gender-neutral language in the liturgy has occurred during a period of rich theological reflection on the Trinity. During the past forty years new work on the Trinity has been done by Anglican, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox theologians, by progressives and conservatives, by men and women. The notes in the LaCugna volume may be used to review the depth and breadth of that work. Works referred to above are as follows: Pierre Jounel, "The Feasts of the Lord in Ordinary Time," in The Liturgy and Time, vol. IV of The Church at Prayer (Collegeville, 1986); Dwight W. Vogel, "The Depth Dynamic of Christian Worship: A Trinitarian Perspective," Worship 76/4 (July 2002); Enriching Our Worship: Supplemental Liturgical Materials prepared by the Standing Liturgical Commission 1997 (New York, 1998); The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, A New Zealand Prayer Book/He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa (San Francisco, 1997); Catherine Mowry LaCugna, God for Us: The Trinity & Christian Life (San Francisco, 1991).

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].

Contributions to AVE

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

William Haithcoat, $25; George Gosden, $100; Peter Yeager, $25; George Handy, $25; the Rt. Rev'd Francis Gray, $100; John Sully, $50; Peter Manzo, $35; Robert Cutting, $50; Blair Hart, $10.

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.
THE CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER

1 Su  THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM

2 M  Martyrs of New Guinea
Labor Day (Federal holiday schedule: one Mass only, at 12:15 PM)

3 Tu  Weekday
4 W  Weekday
5 Th  Weekday
6 F  Weekday  Abstinence
7 Sa  Of Our Lady

8 Su  THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM
Dr. R. William Franklin, Bishop's Scholar-in-Residence, the Diocese of New York, Preacher
Constance, Religious & Martyr, & her Companions, Martyrs

10 Tu  Weekday
11 W  FOR THE DEPARTED
SOLEMN REQUIEM MASS 12:00 NOON
The Right Reverend E. Don Taylor, Vicar Bishop for New York City, Celebrant & Preacher
Mass ordinary: Missa pro defunctis, Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

12 Th  John Henry Hobart, Bishop
13 F  Cyprian, Bishop & Martyr  Abstinence
EVE OF HOLY CROSS DAY
CHORAL RECITAL 5:30 PM, by the Choral Scholars, Princeton, New Jersey
SOLEMN MASS 6:00 PM
Mass ordinary: Missa "Osculetur me," Orlande de Lassus (1532–1594)
Motets: "Salvator mundi," Thomas Tallis (c. 1505–1585)
"Crucifixus," Antonio Lotti (c. 1667–1740)
A relic of the True Cross will be reposed for veneration by the faithful in the Lady Chapel following the Mass

14 Sa  HOLY CROSS DAY

15 Su  THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM

16 M  Ninian, Bishop
17 Tu  Weekday
18 W  Edward Pusey, Priest
19 Th  Theodore, Archbishop
20 F  John Patteson, Bishop & Martyr, & his Companions, Martyrs  Abstinence
Eve of Saint Matthew's Day 6:00 PM

21 Sa  ST. MATTHEW, APOSTLE & EVANGELIST

22 Su  THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM

23 M  SAINT MARY MAGDALENE

24 Tu  Weekday
25 W  Sergius, Abbot
26 Th  Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop
27 F  Vincent de Paul, Priest  Abstinence
28 Sa  Of Our Lady

29 Su  SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS
SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM
Mass ordinary: Missa "Descedit Angelus Domini," Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594)
Motet: "Duo seraphim," Juan Esquivel (c. 1563–after 1613)
SOLEMN EVENSONG & BENEDICTION 5:00 PM
The Reverend Canon John G. B. Andrew, Rector Emeritus, Saint Thomas Church, Preacher

30 M  Jerome, Priest & Monk

THE CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

1 Tu  Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus

2 W  The Guardian Angels

3 Th  Weekday  Abstinence

4 F  Francis, Friar

5 Sa  Of Our Lady

6 Su  FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH
PROCESSION & SOLEMN MASS 11:00 AM
Mass ordinary: Missa brevis in D-dur, KV 194, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
Anthem: "Behold, the tabernacle of God," William Harris (1883–1973)
SOLEMN EVENSONG & BENEDICTION 5:00 PM
The Reverend Canon Carlson G. Gerdau, Canon to the Presiding Bishop & Primate of the Episcopal Church, Preacher

7 M  Weekday
8 Tu  Weekday
9 W  Robert Grosseteste, Bishop
10 Th  Weekday
THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Monday, December 9, 2002, at 6 PM

PRINCIPAL CELEBRANT
The Right Reverend James W. Montgomery, Ninth Bishop of Chicago

CONCELEBRANTS
The Reverend Canon Edgar F. Wells, Eighth Rector of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin
The Reverend Stephen Gerth, Ninth Rector of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin

PREACHER
The Reverend Larry P. Smith, Rector of the Church of the Incarnation, Dallas, Texas

Music by Francisco Guerrero & Peter Philips

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.