

A Word From Our Bishop



*The Right Reverend
William G. Cliff
Bishop of Brandon*

In the midst of everything that has been brought to pass in the last couple of months, I have been encouraging others to see a way forward, and to look for positives in our situation. In the hours I have been spending on Zoom meetings (video conferencing for those who are blissfully ignorant of such things) I have been encouraging us to take from this wilderness time of social isolation and pandemic the opportunity it presents us. That is an opportunity to restore prayer in our homes.

I was raised in an Ontario that still had schools reciting the Lord's Prayer and hearing a scripture verse over the intercom each morning after we had stood and sang O Canada. In fact for three of my high school years, I was the guy saying the Lord's Prayer, and choosing the scripture to be read each day. So I shouldn't be surprised I suppose that I ended up doing what I am doing now. It might surprise you to know that I don't have strong

feelings about a return to prayer in schools - at least not the way that I was taught to pray in my school. The program "professional praying" which was done in a cursory manner did not teach me to pray deeply, or to depend on Jesus. It did manage to teach me the Lord's Prayer; that one I got. But all the rest? I am afraid I was a nominal practitioner of the life of prayer. I prayed, but not regularly and not faithfully, not for a long time.

I fear that my whole generation and the one before me were taught to pray in school and in church and so we never really got around to praying at home. This may come as a shock to you, but the idea being that prayer was taught and practiced at school and at church, we didn't really do that sort of thing at home. Certainly not in a formal or organized way. It is almost as if the natural training ground for prayer (a praying family) got co-opted by the "professionals" (teachers and clergy). The little bit of religion I got at school acted like the vaccine I got for smallpox. It left a mark and made it nearly impossible for me to catch on to the gospel message. This was my experience at least.

I am hoping that the pandemic may give us a gift. That gift would be the rediscovery of bible study and prayer in our homes. Gospel Based Discipleship is one profound gift which can restore our birthright as Children of God, as are many other programs and resources. The important thing is that we are meant to pray together in our homes, with one another and for

the good of the world. Whatever our online worship resources and stopgap measure create for us in this pandemic time, let us not lose sight of the gift we have been given. Time to worship and pray at home and the chance to teach our children and grandchildren the life long project of praying as a family. Pray with your children, pray with your grandchildren and pray with your spouse and your friends. By all means let us regain what previous generations knew so well:

*"What a privilege to carry everything
to God in prayer"*

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page! Search "The Diocese of Brandon" on Facebook, or go to <http://www.facebook.com/brandonanglicans>

You can find an electronic copy of the Mustard Seed there each month, as well as photos from recent events in the diocese!

The Mustard Seed

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Contributions to the expense of the paper are normally requested each March but donations are accepted anytime. Changes of address can be made through your parish or directly with the Anglican Journal. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Bishop or of the editor.

Deadline for submissions: the first of the month. *Please note:* All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, timeliness, appropriateness, or length. Submit writing to the Editor in Microsoft Word file format or in the body of an email. Photographs must be large, high resolution jpg files. Please ensure you have permission from parents or guardians of all minors who have their photos or names published in The Mustard Seed. If including a photo, please send a name of who took the photo along with it, so the Editor can give proper credit!

A Statement to the Parishes from the Bishop Regarding Camp in 2020

originally released on May 1st, 2020

May the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of an eternal covenant, make you perfect in all goodness so that you may do his will; and may he create in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21

The Province of Manitoba has released its plan for phasing in a return to more ordinary life in the province, and we are watching closely and encourage all to follow the instructions of Public Health officials. Contained in that plan was a final determination about the possibility of opening and operating the Anglican Memorial Church Camp at Riding Mountain National Park for the summer season. The Diocese of Brandon is not able to accommodate and safely ensure the required distancing protocols in our cabins and throughout the camping experience. The restriction on our gatherings and worship services has made fund raising and recruitment very difficult and it is not clear that the businesses and vendors that support the camp operation will be able to operate due to a possible continuance of the park closure. To that end, I am very reluctantly announcing that there will be no 2020 season of Camping at the Anglican Memorial Church Camp.

I have delayed this announcement hoping the situation might change, but the safety of our children and elders in the northern communities from which our campers come overrides every other consideration.

We look forward to a full camp and a joyful return to the forest and lake at AMC in 2021.

Yours Faithfully,

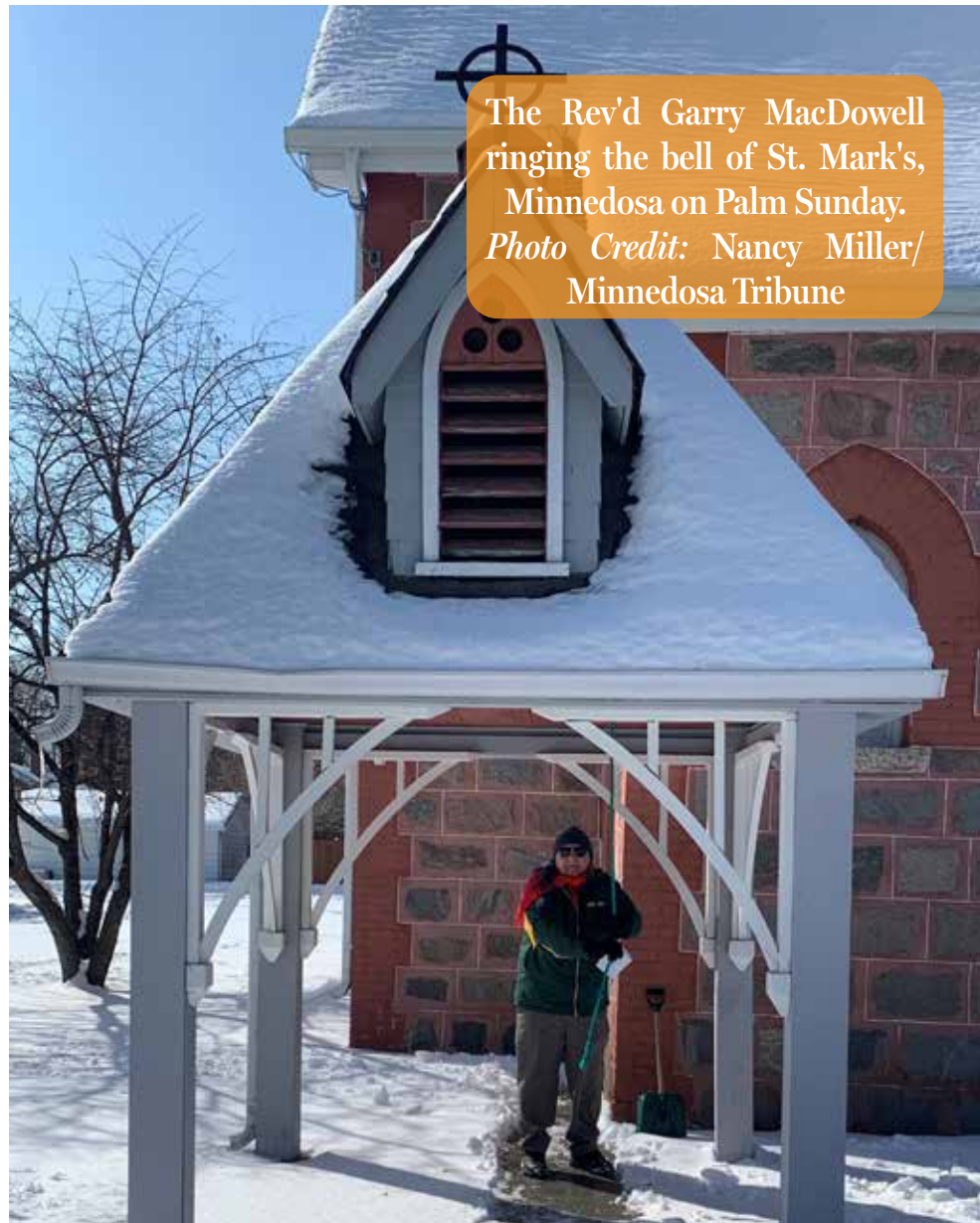
William G. Cliff

News From the Pews

ST. MARK'S, MINNEDOSA Submitted by Lynne Tolton

On Sunday, April 5th, the Rev'd Garry MacDowall rang the bell for one minute at St Mark's, Minnedosa in celebration of Palm Sunday. Since then and until the COVID - 19 pandemic we are facing is over, Garry will ring the bell and say a prayer every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

The folks at St Mark's have made recent donations to our local Food Bank and the Canadian Food Grains Bank through the PWRDF.



The Rev'd Garry MacDowall ringing the bell of St. Mark's, Minnedosa on Palm Sunday. Photo Credit: Nancy Miller/ Minnedosa Tribune

ST. ANDREW'S, WABOWDEN Submitted by Freda Lepine, Lay Reader

Just thought I'd share this as it is a reminder of the way we are all working together throughout the COVID crises, but it also doubles as a teaching for younger people, We have to remember the geese were a main source of food for our Indigenous People and was also used for medicine (fat rendered was used for cold meds and sore throats), the feathers were used for feather blankets and feather pillows, and wings were used as fans during smudge or for fanning a flame to get fire started.

We've have lost 3 members of our community, not COVID related, but definitely a loss to our community as we were unable to grieve with the families the way we normally would. Our hearts and prayers go out to all.

ST. JOHN'S, RESTON Submitted by the Editor (aka: the Rector)

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, Hidden Treasures (the church's thrift store) has been closed. However, that hasn't stopped us from doing ministry to the larger community - outside our store, we've put some shelves and reading material from our ever growing collection. It's been very welcomed by the Reston and Pipestone communities!



St. John's Covid Library
Borrow any books or magazines and return when you are done. We will change up the titles every so often.
If you have a book or magazine to donate, please do! (Any more than 3 or 4 books, please place in the black donation bin at the back of the store.)
Hidden Treasures Staff



On the left: a photo of the camp committee meeting on Monday, May 4. Even though there are no camps this year at AMC, there are plans to make improvements to the property this summer. Photo Credit: Deacon Cheryl Kukurudz

On the top right: the livestreaming setup at Christ Church, Melita.

On the bottom right: the livestreaming setup at Christ Church, Russell. Photo Credit: The Rev'd Chris Pilon



Peter & Paul: A Tale of Two Saints

*Submitted by the Rev'd Dr. Paul Shore
Deacon Assistant, St. Matthew's Cathedral*

St Peter's Basilica is one of the most famous sights of Rome and a destination of every tourist visiting the Eternal City. Less renowned, but equally worth a visit, is the Episcopalian church of St. Paul's Within the Walls (so-called to distinguish it from another St. Paul's, located outside the ancient walls of Rome) on the busy Via Nazionale. The two churches, their moods and colours, reflect the men whose names they bear. St. Peter's, its bright dome (one of Michelangelo's brainwaves) set against an Italian sky, is the perfect backdrop for an opera-- check out the last act of Tosca! St. Paul's facade, with its endless patient horizontal lines, suggests a page filled with many words, rising steadily heavenward. Its interior is subdued, and a visitor has to look carefully to spot its finer details.

Two very different places, commemorating two very different men, who nonetheless share a feast day, June 29. Their names are very well known to us, but there is an additional, if less obvious lesson, in the intersection of their lives.

They were not always the best of friends, and it is not hard to understand why. Peter, the Galilean fisherman, was expansive, physical, and not overly given to subtleties – not unlike the overwhelming basilica bearing his name. You could no more ignore Peter than you can ignore St. Peter's, the largest church in the world. Peter gained an understanding of his Master through overpowering encounters with the physical, ranging from the brilliance of the Transfiguration, to the humble cock that crowed three times. Peter was rebuked by an annoyed Jesus who even called him "Satan" (that must have hurt), he frequently missed the point of things, and probably could not read or write. Yet no one did more to ensure the survival of the fledgling Church during its vulnerable early years. He has been called "the greatest saint."

Paul couldn't be more different. As Saul he was meticulously educated in the tradition of the Pharisees, a bookish, list-making person, tending (if we're going to be honest) to be a bit on the compulsive side. He too was rebuked by Jesus, but in what a different way: blinded by a vision on the road to Damascus, Saul was confronted with the risen Christ, who demanded to know, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Saul, as we all know, became Paul, performed the most famous religious U-turn in recorded history, and became the architect of the set of ideas and terms through which we understand our faith. If Peter was spontaneous and strong, Paul was analytical, wordy and apparently not the most physically imposing person you'd ever meet. The Corinthians thought maybe Paul was Mercury, the slight and flighty messenger-god, and that Peter might be Jupiter, the big, bearded hurler of thunderbolts. In some ways, those Corinthians weren't all that far wrong.

Peter and Paul clashed in the city of Antioch over the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles (non-Jews) into the new Christian Church. Not surprisingly, Peter understood the problem in much more physical and traditional terms, while Paul had a different, more universal understanding of what the Body of Christ might be in its fullest sense. Paul's point of view ultimately won out, but that's not the only point to the story. Both men were starting from a place that each understood, both were sincere followers of Christ, and both bravely set forth what they believed to be the truth. Their conflict-- and its peaceful resolution-- made the Church stronger.

Today our Church faces huge challenges (but then when hasn't it?). Our Church needs both Peters and Pauls, even --or perhaps especially-- when they don't see eye to eye. We need women and men rooted in the physical world to remind us that we are in that world and that the physical matters. We also need to remember where we have come from, even if sometimes we end up heading instead in a new direction. And we need people who, when they are confronted with their own shortcomings in that physical world (think of Peter hearing the cock), repent and do better, with strength and courage.

At the same time we need the Pauls as well, who can say "That's what many people think, but consider this!" We need their lists, their shockingly new ideas, their carefully crafted (and sometimes maddeningly dense) arguments, and their gifts to lift language to the heights of "and the greatest of these is Love."

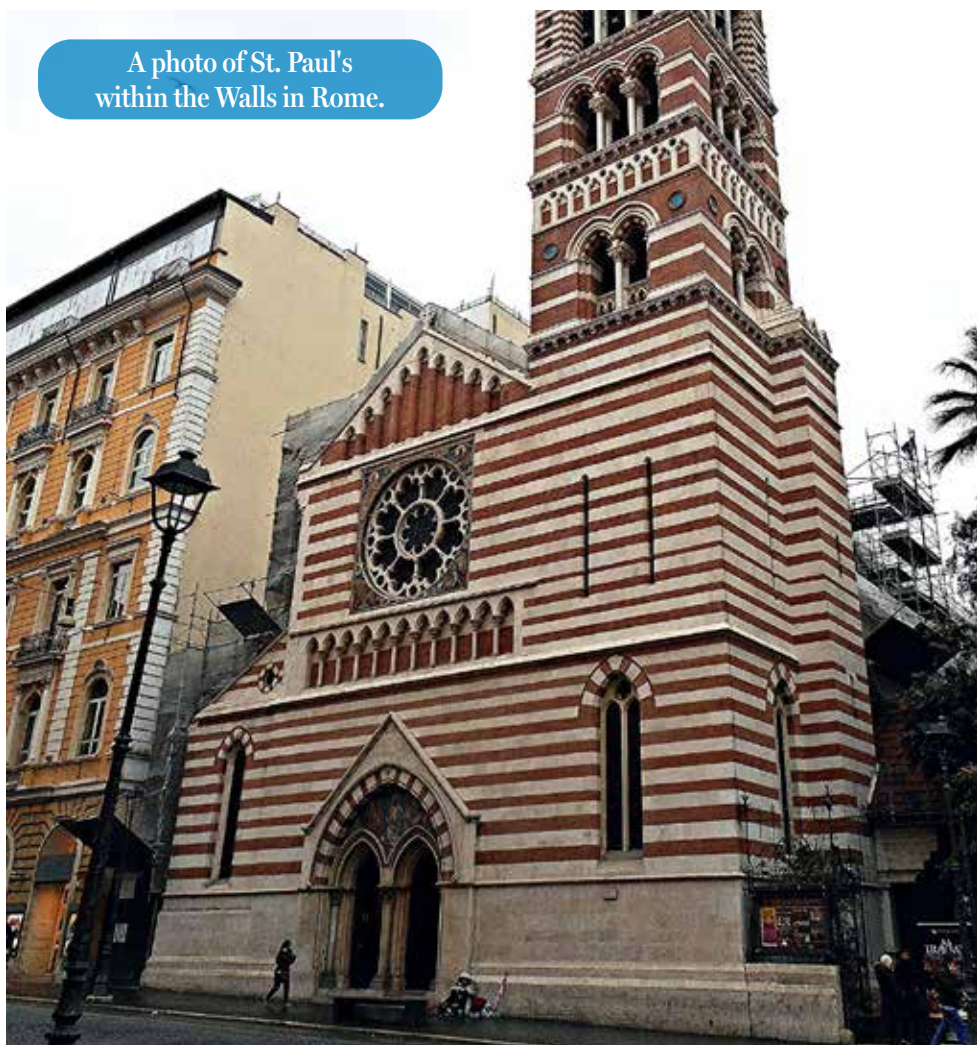
We need – and have among us-- those who have a mixture of both saints in their character. A big dash of the grounded and physical along with the ability to organize and think big. Held together with strength of character and unrelenting energy and faith, and able to make progress, even in disagreement. Which is to say, we need YOU, to serve as Peter and Paul did.

This June 29 there will be no noisy crowds thronging the square in front of St. Peter's, and the traffic on the Via Nazionale will be quiet enough to hear the little green parrots that hide in the trees near St. Paul's Within the Walls. In this moment of calm let us remember the two men who gave so much to the Christian faith and who are both models of ways to be a Christian, ways that are needed today as never before.

A photo of St. Peter's Basilica
in Rome.



A photo of St. Paul's
within the Walls in Rome.



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