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The Mustard Seed.

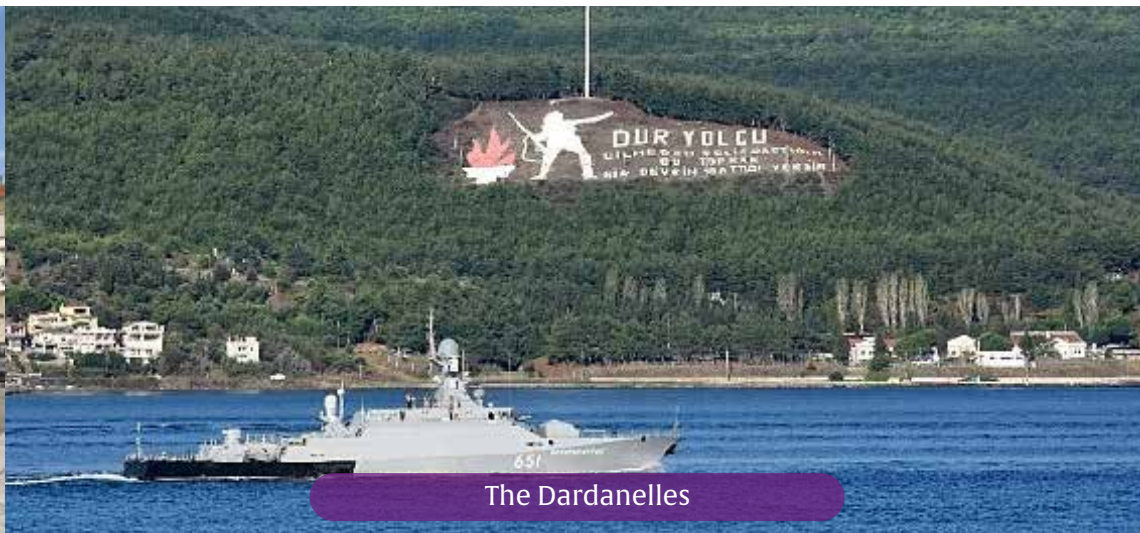
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A European View of Lent

Text and photos by the Rev'd Dr. Paul Shore
Honourary Assistant, St. Matthew's Cathedral, Brandon



The old town of Hradec Králové.



The Dardanelles

As some of you know, I have an appointment at a university in the Czech Republic for the next four months, and Dean Don Bernhardt has asked me to write a few words about what is happening in Europe at the moment. First, please know that I am more than 300 miles from the closest instance of violence in Ukraine. So I am in no danger whatsoever, but with more than a million refugees fleeing Ukraine, and possibly much worse to come, the town in which I am based, Hradec Králové, will no doubt experience repercussions in the months ahead from the invasion of Ukraine.

By the time this message is in print, things will have continued to change, too, so I won't try to give an up-to-the-minute report on what is happening. But I will try to say something about how this crisis is affecting people in Europe. The invasion of Ukraine needs to be seen in historical context. Within living memory Europe suffered through the worst war in the history of humankind. Many of the institutions that emerged from the ruins of war-- including the European Union, which is supporting my own work here-- were born with the hope that such violence would never come again to the continent.

This story is complicated by the fact that the Soviet Union was one of the liberators of the peoples conquered by the Third Reich, but quickly earned the reputation of a cruel oppressor of the very peoples it had

liberated. The Russian invasion of Ukraine summons up memories of Nazi aggression but also of Soviet tyranny. The Russian leader, Vladimir Putin, has criticized some of actions of the Bolshevik Revolution, but many feel that he is doing exactly what Soviet leaders did.

So, on the one hand, while there is widespread revulsion and anger against the Russian invasion, there is also fear and mistrust as to how Europe should respond. An Italian colleague, a well travelled man with a long career of Christian, humanitarian service, told me that he was frightened by the strong language used by his and other governments in response to Russia's actions. He is horrified by the crimes committed against Ukrainians but worried about the return of a much larger war that his parents' generation lived through. He is not a follower of dodgy internet influencers nor a conspiracy-minded person. But he does not trust the holders of power-- politicians, technocrats, bankers-- in his country to do the right thing. Many have noted and written about the erosion of trust during the Covid pandemic; now in a moment of terrible violence, there is even more mistrust, a mistrust that is not balanced by a clear sense of what to do instead.

I write these words as Lent begins, and it seems to me that there is a connection between the loss of trust in one another, lack of faith in God, and lack of hope in the world

as a place where good is possible. In these times, it is also easy to think and feel without discernment. Feeling horror and even hatred for the violence that the Russian leader has unleashed on innocent people is normal and appropriate. What is much harder (at least for me), is to restrict those feelings to the persons directly responsible, and to feel compassion, for example, for Russian conscripts who have little or no understanding why they are fighting a people they have always been told were their "brothers." Ukrainians are dying, and young Russians are dying, too. So this Lent instead of focusing on "giving up" cookies, or swearing, I am trying to resist the strong temptation to take pleasure in any of the deaths connected with this invasion, while at the same time remaining focused on the immorality, dare I say wickedness, of the invasion itself.

So send what support you can, march, sign petitions, reach out and discover other ways that you can support the beleaguered people of Ukraine. Pray for all who are involved, even the perpetrators, since is what Our Lord would do. And pray for peace, in Ukraine and throughout the world.

Editor's Note: If you wish to donate towards humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund is collecting donations. You can visit their website at <http://www.pwrdf.org> or call them at 1-866-308-7973.

A Word From Our Bishop

In the dim recesses of my memory I have a short phrase, (perhaps wisdom from my family, perhaps not) which is a profound statement of human nature. It comes as two connected statements:

1. *"It takes three weeks to start a good habit, and three days to break it."*
2. *"It takes three weeks to break a bad habit, and three days to pick it up."*

We have been at this Lent thing about 4 weeks now, and there is just under three weeks to go at this point. What stretches out in front of us is the road that takes us to Jerusalem, to the judgement hall of Pilate and ultimately to the cross. It is easy to weary of the long walk of Lent. Like well meaning, hopeful folks in January, we began the year with resolutions about the changes we need to make in our lives. You remember those: "I am going to eat better!" or "I am going to the gym every day!". Our new years resolutions are about making new and healthy habits stick. If you believe the above wisdom, it takes three weeks to make the habit part of you, and only three days to break it.

Just like the beginning of the year, a few weeks on and the gym is no longer crowded, and the bad habits are creeping back in. Lent is similar. We begin with the best of intentions, repenting of the false starts or of the failures which hold us back. Ash Wednesday in its solemnity finds us thoughtful and thinking clearly about what needs to be done.



The Rt. Rev'd William G. Cliff
Bishop of Brandon

And then....and then....we find ourselves back in the same position. Slacking off or wondering what we were thinking by giving up chocolate, or coffee, or junk food; or by taking on that extra discipline for Lent. This is hard work!

The message of Lent, and of the discipline that goes with it, is not that God is pleased with acts of self denial around sweets or coffee, but something much deeper and more important. We are not our urges. We are not our appetites. We are not our wants. Denial of self is the realization that the power which urges, appetites and wants have in us. In any way that those urges, habits or desires break our relationship with one another, or with God - we are being controlled by them, rather than mastering them ourselves. Lent is the spiritual time to take stock of the desires, urges and appetites and wants which may be ruling our hearts before Christ can.

At the same time, while disciplining ourselves, we are meant to take those urges, desires and wants and make our wrestling with them to be an occasion on which we might reach out in an act of mercy, or in charity.

Like well meaning students, some begin Lent like some begin a new semester at school. Doing all the work and never slacking off - but that lasts only for a time, before the real work of temptation starts deep within us. Letting our emotions run riot, allowing our wills to be ruled by desire is the constant temptation. We would rather not allow them to be pruned a little in the lenten season. No one wants to let go of their pride, but that is what we are called to do. No one wants to deny themselves anything - but that is the very problem with the consumption culture in which we live.

This year especially we are all living with the anxiety of the war in Ukraine, the receding pandemic and the worry and concern over the return to some form of normal. You may not have the capacity to take on heavy lenten discipline right now. Simply being present to the unfolding humanitarian disaster may take all you have or can muster spiritually. There too is a temptation to wall ourselves off from the horrors of the world and the war and the suffering around us. The cross teaches us that we must face head on what our humanity truly is: broken and in need of help.

You, as you stand before God, are more than your urges. You are more than your desires. You are more than your wants. You are more than the depression that overcomes you when you see the news. You are more than the powerlessness you may feel in the face

The Mustard Seed

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7th Bishop of Brandon

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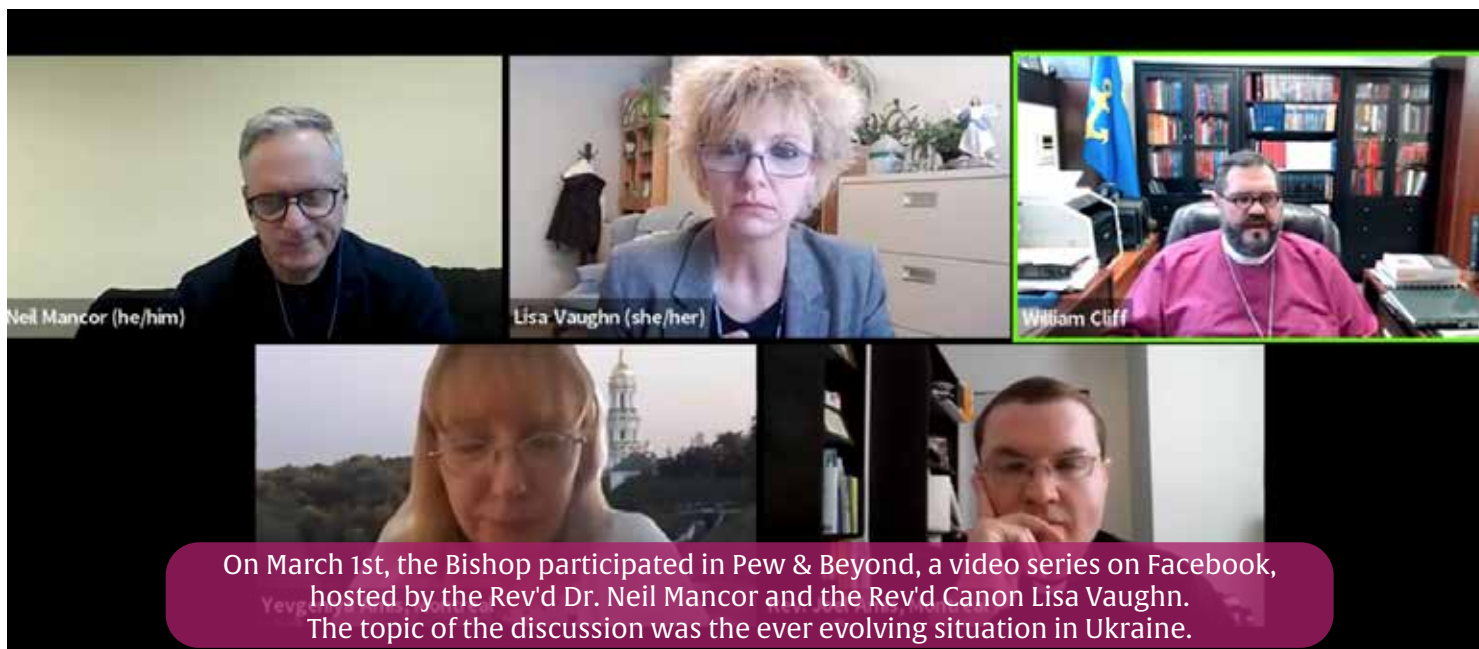
The Mustard Seed is circulated ten times a year (from September to June), as a section of the Anglican Journal, to all supporting households in the Diocese of Brandon.

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!

of the terrors which this world has unleashed.

You are a child of the most high God, who has called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light. This means that you must allow your will to be pruned a little. You must allow your heart to be broken a little because it goes with the road to the cross, and you must allow your heart to be opened a little because it is a hard road, and our brothers and sisters need us to help. The road ahead is all these things, and it may seem daunting, but then again, we are preparing for eternity.



On March 1st, the Bishop participated in Pew & Beyond, a video series on Facebook, hosted by the Rev'd Dr. Neil Mancor and the Rev'd Canon Lisa Vaughn. The topic of the discussion was the ever evolving situation in Ukraine.

News from the Pews

ST. JAMES', RIVERS as submitted by Kathy Roberts



April 17th is a special day for Audrey Sadler she will celebrate her 102nd birthday. Audrey was born and raised in Brandon. She met Robert Sadler while working in Elgin and they were married in 1938. She and Bob made their home in many communities and finally settled in Rivers and took up residence in 1952

on the Riverside Ranch on the bank on the Little Saskatchewan. Here they pursued their love of children, animals and gardening. Audrey and Bob have four children, seven grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and four great great grandchildren. Over the years they fostered more than 100 children, many keeping in touch with them. Audrey has been very active in the community, teaching Sunday School at St. James, volunteering in the elementary school and supporting the Senior Citizen's Club. Audrey resides in her own home in Rivers, sharing it with daughter Kerri-Mae and Son-in-law, Ted Mayor. We extend our love and best wishes to Audrey for a happy, healthy birthday. Congratulations Audrey!

St. James is a small parish but we are active in the community. Regular donations are given to the local food bank and this past month when Gordon and Lois Allen made the usual delivery of food, it included many knitted toques and mittens as well. Given our harsh winter, I'm sure they were well received.

ST. LUKE'S, SOURIS as submitted by Lara Mason

Mae Hart, a member of St. Luke's Anglican Church. Mae sold St. Luke's famous chocolate Christmas mice at the Hartney, Manitoba craft sale in November. The mice have been quite popular for many years and are a major fundraiser for the church!



ST. MARY'S, BRANDON as submitted by David Vail

St. Mary the Virgin, Brandon had a clever approach to the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper during the pandemic. Pancakes, sausages, syrup and fruit were prepared, boxed and offered for take-out this year. We were virtually sold-out!

Thanks to the crew of volunteers who prepared, cooked, and helped with the dinner.

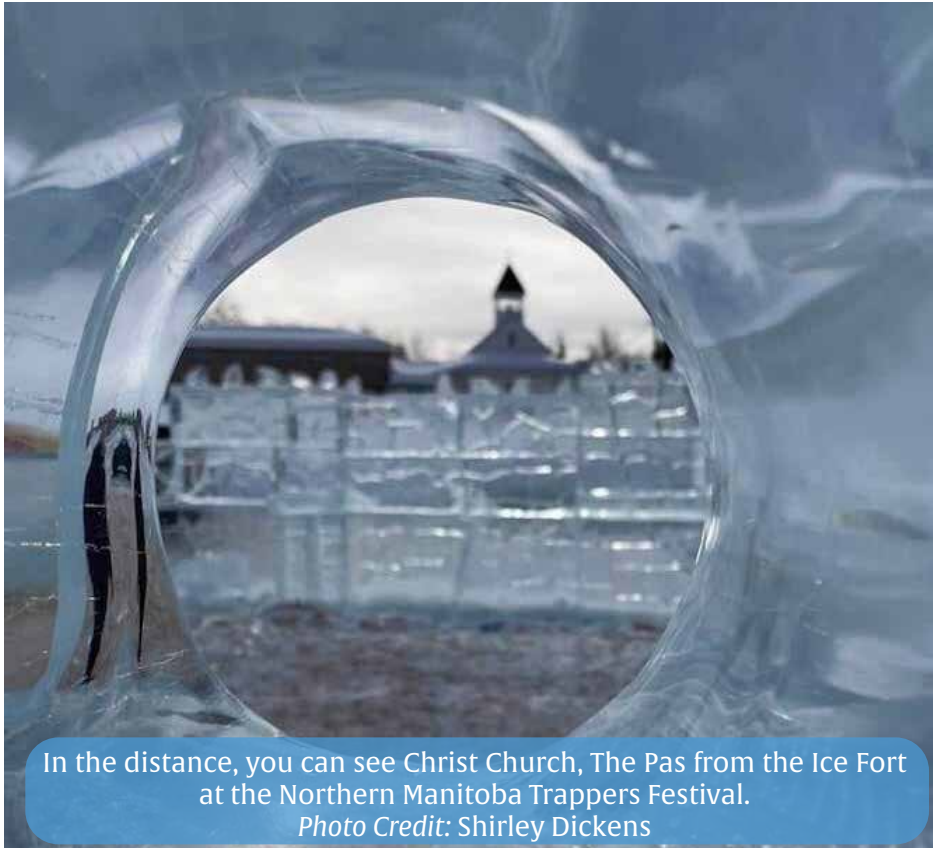


Bernadette Njegovan, Darlene Tuffs-Dunlop and Sharon Vail serve the Shrove Tuesday dinner. Photo Credit: David Vail

THE PELLY PLAINS PARISH as submitted by Virginia Beelaert

On Shrove Tuesday, Christ Church, Russell hosted their annual pancake supper after a hiatus due to COVID-19 public health restrictions. The donations from Pelly Plains Parish members will be sent to PWRDF. In this photo, the Rector of the parish, the Rev'd Chris Pilon serves tea and coffee to the Rev'd Lorraine Bonnell, one of the honorary assistants of the parish, and her husband Garfield.





In the distance, you can see Christ Church, The Pas from the Ice Fort at the Northern Manitoba Trappers Festival.
Photo Credit: Shirley Dickens

HIRING FOR SUMMER 2022



We're searching for multiple PAID positions:

- Cook 1
- Cook 2
- Kitchen Assistant
- Program Director
- Lifeguard
- Maintenance Person

We are also looking for the following weekly VOLUNTEER positions:

- Camp Facilitators
- Councillors
- Health Officer
- Chaplain

Send resumes to camp@brandon.anglican.ca

Don't let a missing certificate or skill stop you from applying. We are willing to train the right candidates

APPLY NOW!

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The Ladies Getaway

"The Three In One: A Love Story" scheduled for June 2022

This event has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is our hope to have it in June 2023!

The Anglican Fellowship of Canada

LET US PRAY

APRIL 18TH (EASTER MONDAY) AT 12:00PM:

The Easter Story with Music, led by the Ven. Paul Feheley

MAY 16 AT 12:00PM:

Re-Imagining Prayer (Imaginative Prayer)

JUNE 20 AT 12:00PM:

Praying with Icons (including Indigenous Icons), led by the Most Rev'd Anne Germond

For more information, check out their website at www.anglicanprayer.org or contact the Rev'd Deacon Barry Nadolny at barrykn@zoho.com or 204-638-6531.

ANGLICAN MEMORIAL CAMP INFORMATION

2022 SUMMER CAMPS

Teen Camp: Saturday, July 2 – Friday, July 8

Family Camp: Sunday, July 11 – Wednesday, July 13

Junior Camp: Sunday, July 17 – Saturday, July 23

Intermediate Camp:

Sunday, July 24 – Saturday, July 30

Early-bird date: May 13, 2022, Cut-off date: June 13, 2022

Every camp registration in by June 13, 2022 receives a free ticket into our raffle.

CAMP FUNDRAISING BARBEQUE

Rideau Park in Brandon - June 4, 2022

2022 CAMP RAFFLE

Draw Date: June 14, 2022 at Noon
1 ticket for \$10 & 3 tickets for \$20

Tickets available to purchase through your parish or by contacting Deacon Cheryl in the Synod Office (204-727-2380 or admin@brandon.anglican.ca). Payment can be made by e-transfer to finance@brandon.anglican.ca. Use the password raffle.

1st Prize: 3 Night stay at Geiler Corner, Wasagaming, on Thanksgiving weekend 2022 (a \$1650 value)

2nd Prize: Kayak w/ Paddle (an \$800 value)

3rd Prize: Meat Package (Donated by Robert Jasper, a \$500 value)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AMC, FEEL FREE TO CHECK THEM OUT ON:

FACEBOOK: [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AMC1950/](https://www.facebook.com/AMC1950/)

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