

Diocese of the Central States News

Volume IV, Issue 1: Advent 2014



A Message from Bishop Morse

Psalm 133

A Song of Ascents.

How very good and pleasant it is

when kindred live together in unity!

It is like the precious oil on the head,

running down upon the beard,

on the beard of Aaron,

running down over the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew of Hermon,

which falls on the mountains of Zion.

For there the Lord ordained his blessing,

life for evermore.

Since our synod I have thought a great deal about what a blessed time that was. It is very encouraging to me as your Bishop, but more importantly it brings glory to God, for us to have had such evident delight in our fellowship together at the diocese meeting in Cincinnati. There are many blessings that we received during that time—the presence of our Presiding Bishop, the Most Rev. Roy Grote, the thoughtful and edifying lectures by the Rev. Chris Beckham and the Rev. Brad Cunningham, the hospitality of the Rt. Rev. Peter Manto and Trinity Church, and the pleasant renewal of friendships after a year apart. There was also the wonderful banquet and band.

One of the best things about being the bishop is that Marianne and I get to see you more often than once a year as we travel around the diocese during the year. Such a wonderful time together heightens our anticipation for Synod 2015 in Chelsea, AL, hosted by the Rev. Canon Scott Houser and St. John's parish. The place is a conference center built by the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama that St. John's now uses for worship.

In Matthew 9 we read of our Lord Jesus healing many different people and teaching in the synagogues of many different cities. Upon seeing the crowds coming toward him Jesus was moved with compassion because they were like sheep with no shepherd. That view caused him to tell his disciples that the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, and therefore they should pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Jesus doesn't tell them to work feverishly to bring the Gospel to the multitudes, but rather that they are to pray to God, who is charge of the harvest, to send people to minister to them. In the prayer book we have the prayer for the increase of ministry that God's saving Gospel might cover the earth.

As we move through airports, or drive the interstates, let us remember the importance of that prayer for the crowds of people who are still like sheep without a shepherd. May God be pleased to bring them to Jesus, the only true Shepherd of souls.

Diocese of the Central States

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Send submissions for the next issue by 22 February 2015 to Dss. Teresa Johnson at newsletter@recdss.org.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

| Parish/Mission | Date |
|---|-------------|
| St. Andrew's, Asheboro, NC | 12/07/14 |
| Christ Our Hope, Westpoint, TN | 12/14/14 |
| Trinity REC, Mason, OH | 12/21/14 |
| All Saints, Raleigh, NC | 12/28/14 |
| Resurrection, Shalimar, FL | 01/04/15 |
| Fr. Matt and Sora Colvin, Missionaries, Davao City, Philippines | 01/11/15 |
| Christ the King, Dayton, OH | 01/18/15 |
| St. Andrew's, Signal Mtn, TN | 01/25/15 |
| Trinity, Evansville, IN | 02/01/15 |
| St. Paul's, Greenfield, IN | 02/08/15 |
| St. James, Memphis, TN | 02/15/15 |
| Holy Trinity, Fairfax, VA | 02/22/15 |

Report on the Seventh Synod of The Diocese of the Central States

The seventh synod of the Diocese of the Central States was held at Trinity REC, Mason, Ohio, from October 23 to 24, 2014. There were 66 people in attendance representing clergy and lay members from 19 parishes. The diocese was honored to welcome The Most Reverend Royal Grote, the new presiding Bishop of the REC.

The meetings began on Thursday, October 23, with a service of Holy Communion at Trinity Church. Bishop Grote was the celebrant and preacher, and was assisted by Rt. Rev. Peter Manto.

Bishop Morse officially opened the synod business meetings and then welcomed the clergy, delegates and guests. Fr. Richard Palmer, the Dean of the Pro-Cathedral of the Diocese of Mid-America of the Anglican Province of America brought greetings from their presiding bishop, The Most Reverend Walter Grundorf.

Bishop Morse proceeded to read his Episcopal report. The report outlined the bishop's work in the diocese over the past year and is posted on the diocesan website. A report by Bishop Manto is posted there as well.

The education portion of the synod consisted of two presentations. The first by Fr. Brad Cunningham, an REC clergyman currently serving in an APA parish in Florida, who explained his own experience as a candidate within the Roman Catholic Ordinariate. Fr. Brad eventually exited the program and returned to his Anglican orders. His personal account of the entire experience provided helpful insight for our clergy and affirmed the orthodoxy, beauty, and ministry of our Anglican tradition.

The second presentation was given by Fr. Chris Beckham, an REC clergyman currently employed as professor of education at Morehead State University in Morehead, KY. Fr. Chris gave a review of *What St. Paul Really Said*, by N.T. Wright. While impressed with many of Wright's insights, Fr. Chris concluded that Wright's "new perspective on Paul" was just too new and untested to replace the traditional understanding of justification and grace.

Canon Bill Jerdan updated the synod on the work of the REC Board of Foreign Missions. He also announced that he and Bishop Manto would be traveling to Singapore in two weeks to attend

the Missions Consultation Roundtable at the invitation of Diocese of Singapore. Canon Jerdan and Bishop Manto will then travel to the Philippines to visit the Colvins and discuss their work and future plans.*

Our missionary, Sora Colvin, was present and gave a report of the Colvin's missionary work in the Philippines. All is well, but the family is facing an important decision regarding where they will serve when Sora's term at the Davao clinic ends in June 2015. Many of the parishes represented at synod provide support for the Colvins.

Mrs. Joan Workowski gave a presentation on the Women of the Church organization. Our diocese is still not very involved, and Joan made an appeal for clergy and delegates to apprise the women in their respective parishes of the existence and work of this group and appoint a representative. Also of note: the REC Committee on Women's Work announced that they have asked our own Janice Manto to write the devotional booklet to be used beginning in April 2015 by the Women of the Church.

Thursday's meetings ended with Evening Prayer followed by a banquet together in Mason. It was a Cincinnati special as the Montgomery Inn provided a fabulous meal, and the Big Jazz Band, a fifteen-piece ensemble, entertained us.

Friday's events ended with a Service of Holy Communion, Bishop Morse celebrating and preaching, assisted by Fr. David Truax.

The overall tenor of the meetings was positive, the presentations were helpful and informative, and the members of Trinity Church were gracious and organized hosts.

Fr. Scott Houser formally invited the diocese to hold the 2015 synod at St. John's Anglican Church in Birmingham, AL, and the invitation was enthusiastically received.

Respectfully submitted,

Rt. Rev. Peter Manto

**For photos and more information on this trip, visit the [REC BFM page on Facebook](#).*

Report from St. Paul's, Greenfield, IN

By Mr. Grant Ford, Senior Warden

Grant Ford and his wife, Jeni, of Greenfield, IN, recently attended the 2014 Synod of the Diocese of the Central States at Trinity Church located in Mason, OH. Ford represented St. Paul's Anglican Church (REC) of Greenfield.

Ford is a candidate for ordination in the Reformed Episcopal Church and serves as Senior Warden of St. Paul's Anglican Reformed Episcopal Church in Greenfield. He was confirmed by Bishop Daniel Morse on Friday, October 24, before the Holy Communion service. Ford participated in Morning Prayer with the Rev. Chris Herman during Synod.

Under the direction of both Bishop Morse and Bishop Manto, Ford is involved in overseeing St. Paul's while "The Little Church Off the Square" is in the process of seeking a minister. St. Paul's has Morning Prayer services weekly led by Ford. Holy Communion every third Sunday is celebrated by visiting ministers from sister churches from Ohio, Tennessee, and Indiana. Ford also moderates St. Paul's weekly Bible/book study each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. He may be reached by calling 317-498-5114.

Visit St. Paul's website: www.stpaulsanglicanrec.org.



Grant Ford with Bishop Manto and Bishop Morse

Report from the Philippines

By Fr. Matt Colvin

Fr. Matt spent ten days visiting parishes of the Missionary Deanery of Indonesia, getting to know Dean Timothy Chong and other clergy from the Anglican Province of Southeast Asia. He spent time in Jakarta and Bandung sharing in worship with our Indonesian Anglican brothers and celebrating the Eucharist in a medium security prison. Dean Timothy Chong is looking to start an Anglican seminary, and discussed his vision and goals with Fr. Matt. He also introduced him to the Book of Common Prayer translated into Bahasa Indonesia, the beauty of Batik clergy shirts, and the joy of eating with chopsticks. Fr. Matt will return to Indonesia next June to teach a one-week intensive class on New Testament theology at the Bible college in Bandung. Please pray for the Colvin family as they seek the Lord's guidance for their future work.

On returning to the Philippines, Fr. Matt resumed Greek class for his friends among the Protestant clergy and other church leaders, and started a new class on hermeneutics. His students thanked him this

Keep up with news from the Colvins at

<http://receivewithmeekness.wordpress.com>

month for "over a year of meaningful learning" as they are developing into able readers of the New Testament in the original language. There are only a few new concepts left before they will have finished all of Greek grammar (and read the gospel of Mark in the process).

Pictured below is a typical Greek class: with students huddled over worksheets doing Greek composition, the table cluttered with various Greek Bibles, and the board filled with verb forms.



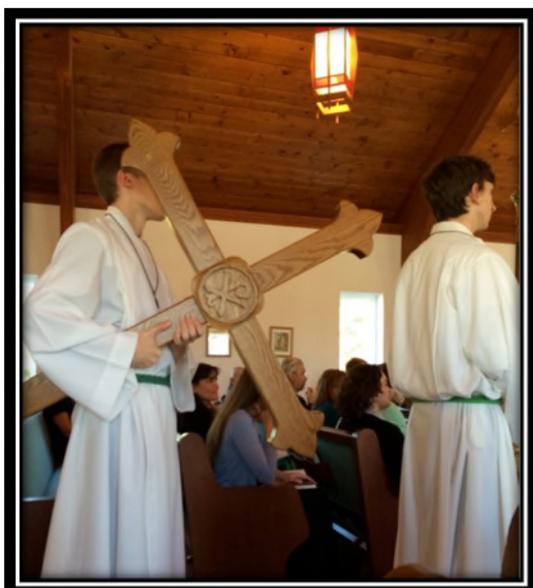
Episcopal Visit, Trinity Church, Mason, Ohio

By The Rt. Rev. Peter Manto

Bishop Morse made his episcopal visit to the Trinity parish on October 26, 2014, two days after the diocesan synod was held there. It was a memorable Sunday as Bishop Morse dedicated a beautiful Chancel Cross for the congregation. The cross is made of white oak from the property of parish members Dave and Katy Kern, and was constructed by local craftsman, Scott Elliott. Scott donated his services to the memory of his 90+ year old grandmother who passed away while he was working on the project. The "Chi Rho" on the cross was fashioned by local artist and woodcarver, Norbert Hartman.

It was a moving, joyful and memorable moment as Bp. Morse prayed to dedicate the cross at the entrance to the nave, the acolytes then carrying the cross forward in procession and hanging it on the front wall as the congregation sang "Lift High the Cross."

Bishop Morse also confirmed six people: Matthew Shock, Hannah Langdon, Samuel Langdon, James Malson, Wendy Truax and Laura Truax, and welcomed Jim and Francine Stubblefield as new members of the congregation. Pictured below are the confirmands and their families, and the Stubblefields with Bishops Manto and Morse and Fr. Truax.



The Next 10 Years of Powerful Partnerships and Transformed Lives

Guest Articles from Anglican Relief & Development Fund (ARDF)

Meet Canon William E. Deiss

By The Rev. Charles Treichler



Canon Deiss

The Anglican Relief and Development Fund is honored to welcome Canon William “Bill” E. Deiss as our new Executive Director as of July 1, 2014. Canon Deiss brings a wealth of experience to his new role with a background in both international business and ministry at the Falls Church Anglican, where he served as Parish Administrator for over 19 years. He holds a BS in Aeronautical Engineering from Princeton University and an MS in Industrial Engineering from the University of Toledo. Previously, Canon Deiss served as the Chairman of ARDF’s Board of Trustees for three years.

“It’s more than an honor to be called to serve the Anglican Relief and Development Fund as Executive Director,” Canon Bill said. “It is a lifetime opportunity to be part of something spiritually significant in the lives of so many people worldwide.”

“Over the last ten years, this Fund has established itself as a strong mission arm of the worldwide Anglican Church, serving over a million of the poorest of the poor. ARDF exemplifies the unity of the worldwide Anglican Communion, working together, investing in sustainable development projects that serve people in great need and show God’s love to all involved. ARDF knows God is pleased when we obey by loving, giving and serving the poor, enabling them to live more sustainable, holistic and contributing lives. In addition ARDF assists people after natural or man-made disasters through the local church.”

ARDF’s mission is to work within the worldwide Anglican Communion to maximize life change in some of the most challenging parts of the world for the sake of Christ.

Excerpts from

Looking Ahead to the Next Ten Years

By Canon William E. Deiss

ARDF is a small but growing organization, and I believe we are poised to make a huge impact over the next ten years. When I think about what is in store for ARDF and our faithful partners, two words come to mind: opportunity and momentum.

Opportunity:

As Anglicans, we have an incredible opportunity to partner with more than 80 million other members of the global Anglican Communion, most of whom live in developing nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These faithful brothers and sisters are already building powerful ministries in some of the world’s poorest communities—and they have invited us to labor beside them through prayer and financial support.

ARDF unites three donor organizations in the United States, Canada and Australia that together provide the majority of funding for our development projects around the world. A Global Board of Trustees comprised of six Anglican Archbishops representing the very areas we wish to serve oversees these three organizations, and is responsible for approving every project....

Momentum:

There is a growing sense of momentum within ARDF and within The Anglican Church in North America as a whole. Over the last five years, we have been able to more than double the number of projects funded, and with God’s grace, we hope to continue growing at the same rate over the next five years. ...

There are far more opportunities for development and relief partnerships with our brothers and sisters in the developing world than ARDF can possibly fulfill, yet we are determined to be faithful to God’s call. As our Honorary Chair, Baroness Caroline Cox has said, “We know that we can’t do everything. But we must not do nothing.”

We have an incredible opportunity to change lives and show the love of Christ throughout the world. Will you join us?

The full text of this article appeared in the ACNA publication The Apostle, Late Pentecost & Advent 2014.

On My Decision to Quit Civil Marriage

By Fr. Paul Edgerton

A couple of years ago an amendment to the North Carolina constitution was proposed to define marriage. There was widespread controversy and there were outspoken advocates and critics of the amendment. Conservatives largely supported the measure to spell out with clarity that marriage was defined as the union of one man and one woman. Liberals decried the amendment as a violation of civil liberties and a hallmark of oppression. Local churches sponsored rallies and a demonstration on the courthouse steps. I had family members on those steps and ministerial colleagues and friends. There were quite a few folks who wondered why I was not there with them. Some were angry when they found out why not.

I did not support the amendment. And I voted against it. It was not that I supported gay “marriage.” Indeed, had the measure failed, not a single same-gender wedding would have taken place; had it passed, nothing new would have happened at all. I simply felt that it was an abuse of the amendment process to pass an item that did not change the *status quo* except to potentially deny legal status to folks who under common law would have had marriage benefits under the age-old practice of law. An amendment ought to be a change, not a declaration of what has always been. To my eye the conservatives’ attempt was an obvious sign that the issue had been already lost. No state has to say that marriage is between one man and one woman unless that is clearly no longer the shared assumption of its citizens. The amendment’s success would merely signal the culture’s loss.

The debate did, though, drive me to thought and to prayer. I realized that the problem with “marriage” in our country all along was the assumption that civil contract and Christian sacrament could be neatly conflated. Why were the conservatives insisting that the state confer benefits only to civil contracts between persons of opposite gender? The old reasons for doing so are no longer in force: fiduciary benefits and legal protections of marriage were designed to encourage marriage for the procreation and care of children in stable environments. The train left the station on that one a while back. Americans believe they have the right to raise children by whatever means, in whatever environment, to whatever end. The culture now perceives that the government’s conferral of benefits to civil marriage *is*

the establishment and definition of marriage.

And the churches have gone along with it. We have identified civil marriage as equivalent to Holy Matrimony, forgetting the sacramental nature of the rite. And we have done a strange thing indeed: we have allowed our ministers to act as agents of the state to sign civil marriage licenses and to invoke a civil power “vested in” us to proclaim couples joined by both God and Caesar in one public rite. When the states change their definitions of marriage we protest as though their civil constructions have redefined the sacrament. The magistrate and the priest of the Kingdom do not, however, traffic in the same sphere of affairs. What the magistrate binds or looses on earth is bound or loosed only there. What the priest binds or looses on earth is bound or loosed in heaven as well. Why, I began to wonder, were we ministers acting in complicity with the conflation of a secular contract and a divine sacrament that are fundamentally separate and increasingly fundamentally opposed to one another?

I decided I was done. I announced to my congregation that I had repented of my belief that civil marriage and Holy Matrimony were compatible. I had repented of acting in the past as an agent of the state on the basis of my ordination in the Church. I would no longer do so, would no longer sign marriage licenses or pronounce the conferral of a state “blessing.” I would act as a priest of the Kingdom and solemnize Holy Matrimony, praying for the blessing of God upon couples who are baptized and practicing Christians and who are counseled in the uniquely Christian understanding of the covenant of marriage. Caesar would have to rely on his own agents to issue legal licenses. Couples would henceforth be encouraged to go before the magistrate to be pronounced man and wife under the law and come to me to be joined in the sight of God.

Now, due to actions of the courts, North Carolina is seeing its first same-gender “marriages” take place. And I have heard very, very little from the folks who had been so vocal before on the courthouse steps. There is little anger, no outrage. It is as though gay “marriage” has slipped in like a thief in the night and the householders have not yet noticed the effects of the larceny. My congregation has responded with a sense of resignation and renewed belief in true marriage. They understand even more now why I took the position I did a couple of years ago. It is not

On My Decision to Quit Civil Marriage (cont.)

that civil marriage *no longer* equates to Holy Matrimony. It never really did.

When a local Christian magistrate asked what I thought he should do, I told him to do his job, that his pronouncements of civil benefits to civilians under civil law is no infringement whatsoever of his belief concerning marriage. For me to sign the license or offer a blessing to two people of the same gender would violate my position as a priest and imply sacramental grace where none could be. A magistrate is not and never has been a minister of marriage. He or she simply applies the law of the land as it is legislated. Civil marriage is not sacramental marriage, and the considerations of the one are simply non-germane to the practice of the other. I

know this is one more position many of my ministerial colleagues will disagree with me concerning. I also believe time will bear the truth of this one out as well.

Very recently in the journal *First Things* the Reverends Ephraim Radner and Christopher Seitz articulated quite well the problem with ministers signing marriage licenses as agents of the state and called ministers to pledge that they would no longer do so. I call upon my brother priests to consider that we are not able to act any longer as double agents. It is time to let Caesar have his part in his own affairs and to devote ourselves to the teaching, preaching, and moral example of what true marriage in the sight of God really is, and what it is not.

Episcopal Visit, St. James Anglican Church, Memphis, TN

Bishop Morse made his annual episcopal visit to St. James on September 7. Nine people were confirmed. Pictured in the photo at top left with Bishop Morse and Fr. Keith Boettner are Graham Hayes, Emma Smith, Sophie McCaskill, Georgia McCaskill (front row), Amanda Miller, Anna Smith, Myles McCaskill, Ben Miller (back row), and Alice Foster (not pictured). Pictured at top right are Bishop Morse with Jan and Perry Hayes and their son Graham. The service was followed by a meal in the parish hall (photos below).

Visit St. James' website: www.stjamesmem.org.

