

ANGLICAN ORDINARIATE FOR THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES ADVENT 2013

BULLETIN/VOLUME 10, No. 4



BISHOP ORDINARY TO THE FORCES

THE RIGHT REV'D PETER COFFIN STB, MA, DD

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CANONS

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LCol the Rev'd M.L. Staples, CD
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LCdr the Rev'd J. Gosse

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This bulletin is an informal document for the members of Clericus, intended as a means of communication and as an expression of our fellowship. It is issued under the authority of the Anglican Bishop Ordinary. To submit an article, please email madpadre@gmail.com.

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A Word From Our Archdeacon

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)



Col. the Ven. Nigel Shaw
Ordinariate Archdeacon

Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany

These seasons are fundamentally linked and together tell the joyful story of God's presence in our lives. We celebrate the Incarnate God who came amongst us and continues dwell within us today. We look forward with anticipation to an ever richer and deeper manifestation of God's kingdom. The signs of God's presence are all around and as we listen to the ancient stories of the revelation of God's Glory we stand in awe and wonder. Each of these seasons enriches and illuminates the others.

This time of year has been crucial to my spiritual life since my earliest days. Though it really makes no sense to talk about the Incarnation in isolation from the Resurrection it is the story of the Incarnation that more thoroughly caught my imagination. The thought that God would chose to be born as one of us, to live and die as one of us, all for the love of us, captured my mind and imagination as a young person and has been at the heart of my faith ever since.

And it all begins with Advent.

The contrasting images of darkness and light, so prominent at this time, have always resonated deeply for me. The shortening days and gathering darkness of this time of year casts into greater relief the spiritual light glowing in our lives. The growing strength of light throughout the season as each successive candle is lit on the wreath helps symbolically to focus attention on the imminent arrival of the light of the world.

Perhaps the most pressing challenge we face is creating the time and space to focus on Advent as a time of patient preparation. Our military lives have a tendency at the same time to both compress and elongate the seasons. Advent barely arrives and we begin celebrating Christmas, before block leave commences and everyone departs to locations across the country. Equally, Epiphany, if it is to be celebrated, needs to wait until everyone returns. Finding the time amidst the busyness and chaos of the season to focus on our own personal preparation for the arrival of the Christ child in our lives is one of the most vital things that we can do.

Though no musician myself, I have found that the music associated with this season to be a very powerful aid to my preparations. In particular to bring focus to my reflections I have made a tradition of listening to Handel's Messiah early in Advent. Equally important to me has been singing the great hymns of Advent and the wonderful Christmas Carols. Amongst them the most evocative for me has always been "O Little Town of Bethlehem", especially when sung to the tune (Forest Green) I learnt as a child in England. In its lyrics it captures both the cosmic and personal significance of the Incarnation.

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.

I wish to you and those you love a Holy Advent, a Joyous Christmas, and a Blessed New Year.

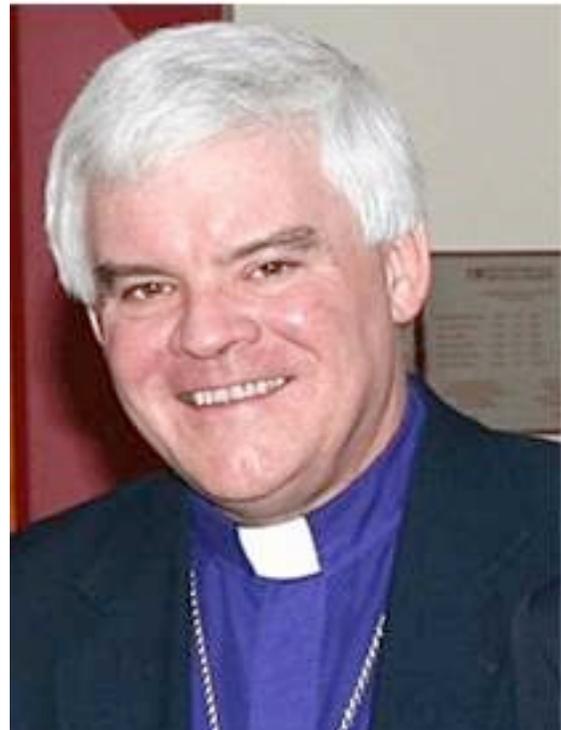
A WORD FROM OUR BISHOP

Advent, 2013

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony to the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.” (*Revelation 22:16*) and as spoken by the prophet, “They will call him Emmanuel which means God with us.” (*Matthew 1:23*)

I love the Holy Season of Advent and all that follows. In the darkness and the desolation of winter there is an expectant hopefulness that the secular nature of the time cannot eclipse. There is the expectation of the bright morning star, being Jesus himself, who is a “light to lighten the nations and to be the glory of Israel” (*Luke 2:32*) and we are led by another star to Bethlehem to see this thing that has come to pass once again. It is so familiar and yet always new. We revel in the story and immerse ourselves in the spiritual preparation to invite Jesus anew into our lives – an inn made ready for him.

In this respect Advent is penitential and a time for rejoicing. It is penitential



because it is a time of interior house cleaning – repentance and new resolve – to provide a place for Jesus. As an ancient abbot of Sinai, John Climacus (d 606AD) wrote: “Repentance is the renewal of baptism and is a contract with God for a fresh start in life...Repentance is the daughter of hope and the refusal to despair.” Therefore we rejoice so that as Jesus finds a place in hearts and homes prepared for him he truly becomes for us personally, Emmanuel, God with us in whatever our lives experience both in joy and as a comfort in affliction.

Advent and Christmas is an affirmation that God enters our vulnerability in Jesus, the baby of Bethlehem, and as the one who took the form of a servant and humbled himself even to death on a cross all for us. (*Philippians 2:6-8*). In this Jesus we are made strong even in our weakness because he has gone there before and maybe we can hear what Saint Paul heard: “My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness”. (*2 Corinthians 12:9*) The baby in the manger is the Word made flesh, I great ‘I am’ and as Mary kisses her son she kisses the face of God and so do we in adoration. “O come let us adore him”.

“How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek hearts will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

May your Advent, Christmas and Epiphanytide be a time of wonder, hope and joy and even if there is sadness in your heart know that Jesus is your companion and God with you.

In His peace and grace, +Peter

AROUND THE ORDINARIATE

On November 17th in Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa – the cathedral of the Ordinariate – some of our chaplains were installed to new positions made vacant by retirements and promotions last year. They were: Col. Nigel Shaw as our Archdeacon (John our Chaplain General is our Archdeacon Emeritus); and as Canons: LCdr. Jennifer Gosse (Chaplain School in CFB Borden), LCol. Todd Meaker (Command Chaplain Land Force Central in Toronto) and Maj. Rob Fead, our Canon Reservist (Rector of Saint Jude's Oakville, Ontario). These are members of the Bishop's Council.

Other Canons were named, effective immediately: Maj. Doug Friesen (Senior MARPAC Chaplain, Victoria); LCdr. Andrew Cooke (Fleet Chaplain, Halifax); LCdr. Ed Swayze (Senior Naval Reserve Chaplain, Thunder Bay) and Maj. Shawn Samson (Brigade Chaplain in Saint John's, Newfoundland)

Padre Todd Meaker is our new Ordinariate Treasurer so if you want to contribute to the Ordinariate through him or have any other questions he can be reached at: Command Chaplain, Denison Armoury, 1 Yukon Lane, Toronto, ON, M3K 0A1

AMO TREASURER'S REPORT

(By Canon Todd Meaker)

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we have now arrived at the half way mark of our journey between our Annual Clericus meeting in June, on behalf of the Bishop and his council, I would like to provide you with an update on the charitable activities to date, that have been achieved through your gracious and faithfulness in financial offerings to the mission of our Ordinariate.

Accordingly, I am happy to report that we have made the following contributions:

1000.00 CAD - To the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in support of the ministry of The Reverend John Organ,

1000.00 CAD – To the PWRDF in support of Philippines relief,
and

1000.00 CAD - To the Campaign for Maryam.

The PWRDF and Maryam charitable donations arose as urgent and un-forecasted pastoral outreach activities during the fall season. I trust the PWRDF is self explanatory, but I would like to provide you a bit of information regarding the Maryam campaign. Here is an explanatory excerpt taken from the campaign, which I believe clearly demonstrates why this pastoral outreach is a ‘natural” for us as a military Ordinariate;

“You may already know about **Maryam Sahar Naqibullah** because of her connection with the CAF. Maryam is the courageous young woman who worked as an interpreter for the Canadian reconstruction forces in Afghanistan helping to support human rights and the UN mission in her country at significant risk to her own life and to her family. While most North American kids her age were in high school, as a fifteen year old she was the main liaison in Kandahar between foreign non-governmental organizations, the Afghan Department of Women’s Affairs, the United Nations and the Canadian and American forces. Due to the increasing security risks that she faced in Afghanistan, Maryam came to Canada (to Ottawa) in October 2011.

Because of her young age (she is now only 19) and as the only female interpreter in the program, she has faced some unique challenges. The program that brought her to Canada would not let her bring her family so she is in Canada by herself and the very modest support that the program provided to her ran out in September of last year. Maryam has been accepted to study international relations at Carleton University in the fall but she is struggling to afford the tuition.

Please keep Maryam, Padre John Organ and people of the Philippines close to your heart and in your prayers, and on behalf of Bishop Peter and our Archdeacons, please know that your dedication and faithfulness in giving is greatly appreciated. Your holy charity is the breath of the Holy Spirit expressing God's grace into mission of our Ordinariate, out into the life of the wider Church and the world,; which is longing to see the face of Christ. May our Lord Jesus continue to bless you, and in so doing, may you continue to be a blessing to others.

Most Sincerely in Christ
Your servant,

Todd+

St. Cecilia Day, A.D. 2013

JUGGLING BISHOPS: A MILITARY CHAPLAIN PAST-TIME

Every Regular Force Anglican military chaplain is on leave of absence from his home diocese. A priest is ordained within a diocese, within the Anglican Church of Canada (or possibly some other Province of the Anglican Communion). When recruited they are placed on leave of absence from that "Home Diocese" and a *Letter Testimonial* is sent from their home bishop to the Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Forces (See the House of Bishops' Statement on Chaplains to the Canadian Forces dated August 1977.) The Bishop Ordinary then issues a new license which grants new credentials and allows them to move anywhere the military demands.

This is different from Roman Catholic chaplains who have the option of being incardinated within their military ordinariate making their military ordinariate their new "home". And it is also different from the United Church chaplains who permanently leave their "home" presbytery and conference and transfer their status into the presbytery where they are posted.

Anglican chaplains therefore have two bishops to juggle: Their Home Diocesan Bishop and their new Military Ordinariate Bishop. But wait...

When they are posted by the military to a new base, somewhere in the world (most likely within Canada) they (most likely) will now find themselves resident within a diocese other than their own home one. It behooves them to then obtain a third license from the diocesan bishop of that new civilian location. Bishop Coffin must send to the bishop of the diocese in which their base is located, a *Letter Bene Decessit* (Departed Virtuously) concerning them and their good standing within the Anglican Church (See National Church Canon XVII). The chaplain must then write to the diocesan bishop asking for his or her licensing credentials. That bishop may respond with a license from that diocese or with a temporary license which must be renewed after a set period of time, or with an informal letter of Permission to Officiate (PTO). There may also be local requirements to fulfill such as a police check or attendance at a child safe course.

Why is it important to be licensed in the diocese where they are posted? In accordance with Anglican Church polity, their license to minister as a credentialed priest from their home diocese is not valid outside of the territorial area of their home diocese. The license from Bishop Peter Coffin is for ministry within his jurisdiction, that is, on federal lands, i.e. military bases. But what if the chaplain visits a soldier and his spouse at their home? What if they are called to attend to an injured soldier at a local hospital? What if they are invited to preach or preside at a nearby church? All of those occasions will see them performing ministry within the diocese of that local diocesan bishop. For insurance, for collegiality, for common decency and good order, and in order to adhere with episcopal agreements since Nicaea, a priest from one jurisdiction does not “do” ministry within the jurisdiction of another bishop without that bishop’s permission. One does not move across borders without permission. And that permission must be sought and obtained before the need arises.

Therefore, Anglican military chaplains are always juggling their relationships with THREE bishops simultaneously: (1) their long standing relationship with their home bishop, the one who ordained them and sent them off for this unique ministry and who will, one day, following their

military retirement, receive them home; (2) their ongoing relationship with the Bishop Ordinary who, through the Primate of Canada licenses them to this unique ministry for the duration of their military employment; and (3) their new short-term relationship with the Diocesan bishop into which their posting sends them. Juggling bishops, a new and unique task of Anglican chaplaincy.

The Rev. Canon D.M. Greenwood



LET US BEGIN: A POEM FOR ADVENT

Some say it is the age of the advent of innovation
humanity's victory over the limits of nature

Some say it is the age of the advent of idolatry
humanity's failure to know our limits

I say it is the age of Advent beginnings
in humanity's infancy

where victories and failures
feed the flames of emerging vision

where Pentecostal fires
consume the tyranny of despair

and where Easter's peace raptures
in our hearts and minds and bodies
and in our families and chapels

as we prepare yet again
for the first time, always so
for the birth in beauty that is God's love

fragile, breakable, broken
forever young and fresh, new

overflowing towards us as we approach
this Advent season.

Padre Robin Major