

By Cheryl Palmer

Advent is a hard sell. Already all over our city “it’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas.” Decorated trees, carols, and Santas abound. Parties are being planned, presents are being bought, and there is a general happy hubbub on our streets and in our homes. Only a few days ago we had a wonderful Holy and Holly Festival, filled with a happy Christmas feeling.

How can the Church’s New Year’s celebration—Advent—with its fairly solemn and often sombre message compete with sleigh bells, jingle bells, and silver bells? Well, we do not have to compete. We simply need to do what we know the Lord requires of us. That is, prepare his way.

At Christ Church this year, I am inviting you to participate in the disciplines of worship and study, as we engage in this unique season of excitement and exhilaration, fear and uneasiness, quiet and contemplation, hope and anticipation. All these are “Advent feelings” as we wait and prepare ourselves for Christ among us.

Advent is a Christian season, and we are committed to recognise and celebrate it. Without Advent—without waiting—without preparation, longing, hope—Christmas is devoid of the joy, the appreciation, the thanksgiving of receiving the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel into our midst. Therefore, as you attend Advent worship and study the scriptures this season, may your preparations lead you to the manger. May your preparations allow you to encounter the Saviour in your heart, in the word of God, in the sacraments of the Church, and in each living person. And finally, may your preparations ready you to meet the One who is to come, who will bring peace and justice and righteousness into the world.

Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel!

✚ Cheryl Palmer is the Incumbent at Christ Church Deer Park.

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Alkadri Family Update

By Jennifer Roblin

The wonderful Alkadiri family is humming along in their new home, Toronto. A recent visit with Suheila and daughter Maysam provided Christ Church Deer Park with all the latest news.

Abd’lsattar is working full time at a new job and is enjoying the challenge. Moaz and Amar continue to work hard at high school, and both have after-school jobs to earn their own spending money. Maysam is keeping up her piano lessons every Saturday and loves playing the saxophone in high school music class. A voracious reader, she also volunteers every Tuesday at Thorncliffe Park Public School, teaching Arabic to young girls in grades 1 to 8.

Suheila is also busy volunteering as a programme facilitator for “Playing with Rainbows.” Run by The Neighbourhood Organization, this programme is designed to help children who are recent immigrants to Canada deal with any trauma or obstacles they may have endured en route to their new lives. Suheila is doing a fantastic job counselling them and encouraging them to open up about their experiences.

The family continues to give back to their new community and country, and we are so glad they are here.

The Alkadiris still have family at the Azraq refugee camp in Jordan*. With the help of The Anglican United Refugee Association (AURA), our parish has undertaken to sponsor Suheila’s brother, his wife, and their four children to come to Toronto. Their application was accepted by the federal government in August, and we will find out some time in the next 20 months if they have been approved. We will keep you posted as we learn more.

* <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/unhcr-jordan-factsheet-azraq-refugee-camp-january-2018>

✚ Jennifer Roblin is a member of the Refugee Support Committee of Christ Church Deer Park and writes this report on the committee’s behalf.

An Advent Prayer Offering

By Robert Gorham

Prayer is a wonderful way to help cut away the distractions of the season and open your heart to prepare for the joy and hope of Christ’s birth. It is my wish that you find “The Manger of My Heart” from Proverbs 31 helpful during the Advent season. May it help you focus your heart and mind for the birth of Jesus Christ.

THE MANGER OF MY HEART

This Advent, Lord, come to the manger of my heart.
Fill me with Your presence from the very start.
As I prepare for the holidays and gifts to be given,
Remind me of the gift You gave when You sent Your Son from Heaven
The first Christmas gift, it was the greatest gift ever.
You came as a baby born in a manger.
Wrapped like the gifts I find under my tree,
Waiting to be opened, to reveal Your love for me.
Restore to me the wonder that came with Jesus’ birth,
When he left the riches of Heaven and wrapped Himself in rags of earth.
Immanuel, God with us, Your presence came that night.
And angels announced, “Into your darkness, God brings His light.”
“Do not be afraid,” they said, to shepherds in the field.
Speak to my heart today, Lord, and help me to yield.
Make me like those shepherd boys, obedient to Your call.
Setting distractions and worries aside, to You I surrender them all.
Surround me with Your presence, Lord, I long to hear Your voice.
Clear my mind of countless concerns and all the holiday noise.
Slow me down this Christmas, let me not be in a rush.
In the midst of parties and planning, I want to feel Your hush.
This Christmas, Jesus, come to the manger of my heart.

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✚ Robert Gorham is the Interim Associate Priest at Christ Church Deer Park.



Vision Planning at Christ Church Deer Park

In October, we launched our vision planning exercise with the help of Paul MacLean, an outside consultant. During our worship services on Sunday, October 14, 2018, parishioners were invited to begin thinking about the future of our parish and to write their hopes and dreams on paper arrows that were collected and collated by the steering team. To date the team has been pleased with the number of suggestions received about Christ Church Deer Park's future.

- Some of the key themes emerging from our initial parish conversations are shown following. They are not listed in any priority.
- Christian development and spiritual growth
 - Retention of children and young adults
 - Reaching beyond Christ Church Deer Park, especially into the neighbourhood
 - Supportive activities for the elderly
 - Revitalization of our services with a view to diversity
 - Growth of the congregation and its resources
 - Strengthened volunteerism within the parish.

Please check out the detailed comments written on the arrows posted on the compass in the Atrium and add yours if you have not already done so. Blank arrows are available by the compass.

The second opportunity to participate in vision planning will take place in November and December and is called "A Church at its Best."

"A Church at its Best" will be a group conversation led by Paul MacLean and designed so that all congregants can participate in our vision planning that is called "Charting our Future with Christ." In these conversations, participants will be asked to envisage what a church at its best would be like, especially what its core values ought to be, and will think practically about how Christ Church Deer Park could achieve the best church imaginable over the next five years.

"A Church at its Best" is a very important building block in creating a vision and plan for the congregation. The session will last about 90 minutes in Elliott Hall and will involve the short imaginative exercise described above plus table group conversations.

To ensure that everyone who gathers at Christ Church Deer Park has the opportunity to participate in this process, the steering team has provided the following four sessions for people to choose from:

- **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25**
following the 10 a.m. service
- **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29**
from 2 – 3:30 p.m.
- **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2**
following the 10 a.m. service
- **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4**
from 7 – 8:30 p.m.

It is important to know how many people are attending each session so that we can plan appropriately. Please pre-register by visiting www.TheresLifeHere.org and follow the links. Sign-up sheets are also available in the office or at a Sunday service if you prefer to register that way.

If you want further information, please contact any member of the Parish Steering Team—Walter Blackwell, Andrew Campbell, William Jackson, Barbara Johnston, Carolyn Kearns, Su Laine Varkey, George Lewis, Jill MacRae, Cheryl Palmer, Andrew Peat, Melissa Walter, and Andrew van Nostrand.

Another Successful Churches-on-the-Hill Food Drive

By Ben Dibben

The Food Bank collection box in the Atrium has been filled on several occasions with welcome donations mostly put in after the Sunday services. In October 80 items were deposited, bringing the 2018 total to almost 500 items.

In addition, over the Thanksgiving weekend in October, donations made an impressive display in the church sanctuary, and these surely reflect the underlying reason we have for diligently observing Thanksgiving each year. It is anticipated that this seasonal donation will become a regular annual item.

The Churches-on-the-Hill Annual Food Drive took place this year on October 27 and November 3, 2018. This involved 215 volunteers of whom 28 canvassed the five Christ Church Deer Park target routes. So far, 234 boxes or crates of goods were collected, along with monetary gifts totalling approximately \$14,000, with additions anticipated in the coming weeks.

This picture shows a small portion of the total donations collected and provides an indication of their delightful variety.

⊕ Ben Dibben is an active and involved parishioner who volunteers at the food bank.



Notes From the Music Library: There's a Voice in The Wilderness

By Emily Chatten

As we approach Advent this year, I feel like I'm wandering in the wilderness, so isn't much of a surprise that this hymn came to mind for this column. The more I looked into it, the more surprises the hymn brought, and I find myself appreciating it more today than I did yesterday.

Advent began as a season of preparation for the Nativity, but over the centuries it took on a deeper and more profound meaning. Advent provides us with a time of waiting in hope before the arrival of Christ. The Old Testament scriptures that we recognize at Advent come from Isaiah, and "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" is a paraphrase of Isaiah 40:3-11.

One of the interesting things about Advent waiting is that it is active waiting as opposed to passive resignation—useful if you're lost in the wilderness and want to find a way out!

The author who paraphrased "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" was James Lewis Milligan, born in Liverpool, England, in 1875. Milligan worked in the trades from the age of twelve before writing for newspapers in London. In 1911, he emigrated to Canada with his family, and he spent his first two years as a Methodist minister in Tweed, Ontario. I don't know how many readers are familiar with that part of the province, but for a man used to the hustle and bustle of Liverpool and London moving to the mixed deciduous woods of Tweed, Milligan would have found himself on the edge of a great wilderness. After a few years he moved to Peterborough where he edited the paper for a couple of years, then worked for The Globe and Mail out of Camp Borden during World War I.

Following the Great War, Milligan joined the Church Union campaign, working to unite the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregationalist churches of Canada. This led to the creation of the United Church of Canada in 1925. Milligan's hymn "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" (to the tune ASCENSION) was included in the Hymnary of the United Church in 1930.

Milligan worked as a civil servant before returning to journalism for a few years until his retirement in 1937. Aside from all this, he had a number of books of poetry published over his life.

James Lewis Milligan passed away in Toronto in 1961 and is buried in St. James Cemetery. I offer this information because it isn't often that a hymn has such a local history. It is even possible that Milligan's work with the Church Union campaign brought him to the Christ Church Deer Park neighbourhood, which was divided by the campaign.

Though not amongst the most popular Advent hymns, this one by Milligan has appeared in 21 hymn books over the years. This Advent I'll be humming "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" as I carrying a light of hope through the wilds.

⊕ Emily Chatten is a Christ Church Deer Park chorister who helps to maintain the parish music library.

What I'd Like for Christmas

By Tony van Straubenzee



When you hit 80 you will quickly realize that the number one topic of conversation is health—either yours or your friends. It must be boring for younger people and your family.

So what do I want for Christmas? Good health, of course. Sure, some good books would be appreciated along with warm gloves. Maybe a tangerine in my stocking.

And yes, dare I say it, less Trump! We are so sick of turning on the news and hearing his rants.

And how about no more sexual abuse or harassment—will it ever stop?

My golf game could sure use some help and what about a hole in one—never have had one.

More laughter would be nice—we are terribly serious these days.

Of course I am being selfish in my wish list, which should include less poverty, the end of senseless killing, and an immediate stop to the destruction of our planet. But a little dark chocolate with almonds would be great.

The truth is, I really am lucky because God has been so good to me, and I shouldn't ask for anything

My New Year's resolution is to never again mention my health problems.

Well, I have to go now. I have a Doctor's appointment—my left shoulder is really hurting me. Merry Christmas!

⊕ Tony van Straubenzee is a regular contributor to Spiritus. He has been a parishioner of Christ Church Deer Park for fifty years.

The Role of a Verger*

In Somerset Maugham's story "The Verger," Albert Edward Foreman lost his position at a posh London parish because he was illiterate and the new vicar found that "the situation is impossible. At a church like St. Peter's, Neville Square, we cannot have a verger who can neither read nor write."

The Washington National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., has no such issues. Head verger, Torrence Thomas, has an undergraduate degree in history with a minor in religion, plus a master's and doctorate in history from Yale University. Thomas supervises 15 other vergers over 1,500 services per year, and it was he who escorted dignitaries like Barack Obama and Al Gore to their seats at John McCain's funeral.

For more information on Dr. Thomas and the role of a verger in Anglican/Episcopalian traditions see <https://www.clintonnc.com/news/33194/sampsonian-serves-as-head-cathedral-verger>

* The editor thanks parishioner Edna Quammie for introducing this topic and providing the reference.



Torrence Thomas, head verger of the Washington National Cathedral, escorts former President Barack Obama during the funeral service for Sen. John McCain.

Stewardship: Update as we end 2018...

By Caroline van Nostrand



Commitment Sunday—November 4, 2018. As members of Christ Church Deer Park our stewardship role is to ensure that our contribution of time, talent, and treasure helps the parish successfully deliver on its Christian mission. We each contribute in differing ways and degrees according to our circumstances, skills, and resources. However, at the end of each calendar year we focus on financial contributions as the Management Team assesses the completion of the current financial year and develops plans and budgets for the next year. Commitment Sunday, held this year on November 4, 2018, is the focus of our willingness to assume our stewardship roles.

Why Should We Commit? Our Growing Healthy Stewards program is based on a year-round view of stewardship contribution, including regular financial gifts over the year to assist planning and avoid year-end deficits. This approach is good for our church organization, but relies on individuals being motivated to participate in sharing their resources. Here are some reasons why we should share:

Testimonials. If you were in church on October 21, 2018, you would have heard two of our most committed members, David Moore and Carolyn

Kearns, explain their drive to give. Part of the reason is the simple recognition that what we give is returning what we have received from God in terms of our skills and worldly goods. Who can say no to that on the basis that such resources are "ours" and should not be shared?

The Example of the Saints. Our Commitment Sunday on November 4 also fell on the Sunday we celebrate All Saints' Day. If you were in church that day you, would have heard Cheryl Palmer remind us that the saints we celebrate are more than just the rock star "names" but include all Christians who have worked and contributed off stage and often in difficult circumstances as stewards to the Christian mission. We stand on their shoulders in the life we enjoy, and it is our duty to maintain and build on the platform for future generations.

How Are We Doing in 2018? It is early at the time of writing to predict how we will end the year financially, but we are pleased with the initial response to Commitment Sunday. The number of parishioners responding early—whether they intend to change their gifts or not—appears to have increased slightly over our initial two years under Growing Healthy Stewards. In addition, some members have

increased the amount of their gifts and/or have made a top-up gift to help ensure we finish the year without an operating deficit. That is the good news. The less encouraging news is that a very large proportion of our base of contributing members does not choose to respond on a timely basis or at all. This affects what we can continue or commit to in terms of program services, such as clerical/pastoral staff, outreach, music, facilities, etc.

Our Hope and Ask of You. When you read this or consider the materials sent to the whole parish before Commitment Sunday, please ask yourself whether you are responding to your stewardship responsibilities as you should. Don't worry if you can't do more when you honestly think you are matching your commitment to your skills and resources. As indicated above, we are all in different circumstances and the test is whether we can honestly say we are giving back what we should. The important aspect is that we all express our commitment or pledge, whether or not there are any changes you plan to make.

⊕ Caroline van Nostrand is a fundraising consultant. She has been a Christ Church Deer Park parishioner since 1996 and volunteer since 2005.

D Day and Me

By Pat Butler

At the age of seven I spied a book in our living room, *The Sixth of June*. “Wow! A book about me?” My birthday is June 6th, but Dad deflected my question; it’s hard to explain D Day to a little kid.

Over time I learned that on Tuesday, June 6, 1944—exactly a year before I was born—Allied troops (Canadian, British, and American) landed on the beaches of Normandy to liberate France from German occupation. If this courageous assault had not succeeded, the society into which I was born could have been very different, without the freedom I have always enjoyed.

History is my least favourite subject, but an alumni travel brochure *D Day: The Canadian Experience* inspired me to sign up.



Beny-sur-Mer Cemetery, France

In early May, I joined fellow travellers on a bus to Cabourg on the coast of Normandy. Our guide’s overview touched on crucial decisions prior to D Day. Where to land? On Normandy’s sandy beaches near existing French harbours. When to land? When the weather was good, the sea calm, the moon full, and the tide right.

On Tuesday, June 6, 1944, 156,000 Allied troops landed. Of these 17,000 Canadians were destined for Juno Beach, and they knew it wasn’t a training exercise when they saw over 7,000 vessels assembled near the Isle of Wight.

Our first all-Canadian stop was Juno Beach. We stood on the sandy beach where the Canadians came ashore. I shivered as I watched waves break gently on the beach, all the while imagining the bloody chaos. The half-timbered house where the Queen’s Own Rifles of Toronto landed is now “Canada House,” and we saw where famous footage was shot as the North Shore (NB) Regiment landed and went ashore.

We watched “They Walk With Us,” a film about the landing. In the final scene a present-day family walks along Juno Beach. Canadian soldiers in 1940s uniforms begin to appear and walk beside them. I wept, having felt the presence of similar ghosts just an hour before.

At Beny-sur-Mer cemetery, 2,048 Canadians are buried, and a large stone tablet reads “THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE.” Our guide recited the *Act of Remembrance*. Then we walked among the white grave markers carved with maple leaves, and we each placed a white rose on a grave.

Later we visited another cemetery, “Place Gerard Dore.” Gerard, from Quebec, was killed at the age of 16, making him the youngest Allied soldier buried in Normandy.

We entered Authie on “Rue de 37 Canadiens” and strolled into a pretty churchyard beside L’Abbaye d’Ardenne. Names of 20 Canadians were carved onto a plaque, and their individual portraits were affixed to a long wall. These young men had been taken

as POWs by a German division of highly-trained, elite Hitler Youth who shot the Canadians in the back of their necks and hastily buried them in this churchyard. In March 1945, Mme Vico returned to her garden and noticed that her row of snowdrop flowers had been disturbed and replanted in a disorderly fashion. Digging up the garden exposed the bodies. Today, poppies and Canadian flags left by recent visitors are affixed to trees nearby.

Back on the bus, I photographed the pastoral scene across the road. Raindrops on the bus window distorted the bright green vegetation and reminded me of the tears that stung my eyes as I learned the Canadians’ story.

D Day only began the Battle of Normandy; it ended about 100 days later at the Falaise Pocket where Germans amassed, trying to get home after the German High Command ordered retreat. The Pocket was initially 50 km long and by 20 km wide, containing 150,000 German soldiers. Canadians, British and Poles were on the north side: Americans and French lined the southern half. Germans managed to get 50,000 soldiers through a 3 km wide corridor around Chambois and Saint Lambert-sur-Dives. This land is now called “the corridor of death.”

We paused at a bridge in Saint Lambert where the River Dives looks like a 3 m wide creek, but is very deep. It prevented German vehicles from escaping.

After the carnage, the land was littered with thousands of pieces of equipment, 10,000 German bodies, and 12,000 dead horses. Allies captured 40,000 Germans. Due to the extreme August heat the ground became white with maggots; the stench of decomposing bodies could be smelt by pilots flying at 15,000 feet; the water in the area was not drinkable until the 1960s. Hell on earth.

When I reached Paris after these visits, I was disturbed by the contrast between “the corridor of death” and my luxurious, modern hotel. I felt disoriented and incredibly spoiled.

Countless aspects of D Day stick with me. Allied soldiers were incredibly brave in the face of overwhelming odds. They innovated on the spot, using rifle barrels to breathe underwater, for instance. Mistakes occurred, like ships uselessly firing too far past the shoreline. Many soldiers were less than 20 years old.

I feel morally obliged to honour the Allies whose actions secured my future and that of my children, and as a result of this trip, being born on the first anniversary of D Day has become even more precious to me.

*See <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/get-involved/remembrance-day/guide-to-commemorative-services#act>. “They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old...”

⊕ Pat Butler is a volunteer chorister and regularly prepares flower arrangements for Sunday worship at Christ Church Deer Park.

Edwin Henry Dibben—Known and Loved

By Ben Dibben

Edwin Henry Dibben



In the September 2018 issue of *Spiritus*, Tony van Straubenzee mentioned that November 11th reminded us of the 100th anniversary of the Armistice following World War I.

In light of his suggestion that a reader could describe any family involvement that makes good reading, I am reporting the experience of an uncle of mine—Edwin Henry Dibben (Harry).

In 1912, Harry emigrated from the UK to Australia and, when war broke out, he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force. The ANZACS were sent over to Europe, and many were involved in battles at and near Fromelles which took place around the border of France and Belgium. Their casualties were very great, and five mass burial pits were set up at Pheasant Wood just north of Fromelles. These pits contained the remains of about 400 British and Australian soldiers, including those of Harry.

The soldiers lay unmarked in the mass grave for almost 100 years.

In the 1980’s or so, when the city decided to take the land and develop buildings there, the remains of the military casualties were transferred to a burial site.

No identifications were known, and each of the individuals was noted on his headstone as “AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER”.

News of the reburials was recorded in England, and a family descendant in Dorset contacted the authorities in England and submitted a sample of his blood. The sample was sent to Fromelles, and DNA technology verified that it was related to the remains of one of the buried victims in the new Fromelles cemetery. As a result, the remains were identified as those of Harry.

In 2015, I went on an escorted tour of the Battlefields and did a side trip to Fromelles. It was a great experience to see a headstone with Harry’s name on it, rather than one of an “UNKNOWN SOLDIER.”

⊕ Ben Dibben is a long-time member of Christ Church Deer Park and a regular *Spiritus* contributor.

Silent Night—An Introvert’s Christmas

By Ward Lindsey

Walk with me – take my hand
if only in thought and mind.
The snow drives hard.
It matters not whether it is night or day
when there is sight of soul.
The bite of cold is held in time,
a star is placed in the east – and I wonder
until I ponder
In all of the decades that I have lived
I have been influenced by this wind of words:
“When all things began, the Word already was”
My breath merges with that Word.
Life giving breath that feeds my heart
that plumbs my depth.
And I sense beneath the veneer of holiday cheer
a solitude that feeds peace and hope
to banish fear.

⊕ Ward Lindsey is a parishioner and volunteer chorister at Christ Church Deer Park.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

AT CHRIST CHURCH DEER PARK

ADVENT STUDY

SUNDAYS, NOVEMBER 25, DECEMBER 2, 9, 16

8:45 am Advent is a time of anticipation.
Discover what you are waiting for!
Go deeper into your journey toward God with weekly readings,
informal conversations and journalling.

ADVENT 1 / SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

10:00 am Advent Lessons and Carols Through sacred Word and music,
the story of the coming of Christ gradually unfolds.

ADVENT 3 / SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

10:00 am Family-friendly Service and Children's Christmas Pageant
All kids are invited to take part. We'll have lots of costumes.
No experience necessary!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

4:30 pm "Joy to the World!" A Community Carol Sing with the
Salvation Army North York Temple Band and the Choir of CCDP

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 pm Casual, fun liturgy for young families
with interactive Christmas Story and Eucharist

'PICK UP' CHILDREN'S CHOIR AT 4:00

Rehearsals Dec. 9, 16 & 23rd at 11:30 am
Interested? kidschoir@christchurchdeerpark.org

7:00 pm Something different and relaxed, Eucharist with dramatic
reading and carols with a variety of musical instruments

The Right Reverend Andrew Asbil,
(new Bishop of Toronto) will preach

9:30 pm Christmas Carol Sing

10:00 pm Traditional Eucharist with choir, carols and candles
Bishop Asbil will preach

CHRISTMAS DAY

9:00 am Quiet, reflective, and traditional Christmas Service
with Eucharist and choir



Third Year is a Charm for Holy & Holly Festival!

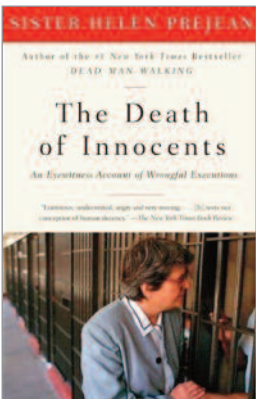
Christ Church Deer Park’s third annual Holy & Holly Community Christmas Festival took place Saturday, November 17, 2018. Thank you to everyone who baked, donated, volunteered, shopped, and helped advertise. What a wonderful community effort!



Editor’s Choice

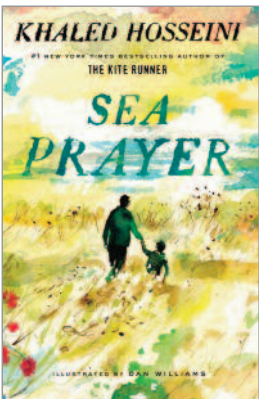
The Death of Innocents; An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Executions
Sister Helen Prejean
(Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2006)

Remember *Dead Man Walking*? This is the less-known sequel where it is likely that the men on death row did not commit the murders for which they were condemned. Sister Prejean has witnessed over eight executions yet never lets her energy rest in her opposition to the death penalty. In a letter to the Pope she said that as they were about to walk to their deaths each of the condemned has said to her “I just pray that God holds up my legs.” Her response? “From the depths of my soul, from Christ burning within me, I found myself saying to them, ‘Look at me. look at my face. I will be the face of Christ for you.’”



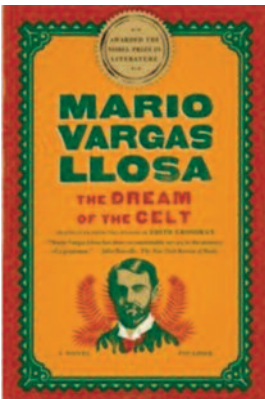
Sea Prayer
Khaled Housseini
Illustrated by Dan Williams
(Viking, 2018)

Prompted by the death of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian refugee who drowned in the Mediterranean while trying to reach safety, this small volume is a tribute in poetry and watercolour. Housseini conjures the stream of consciousness of a parent responsible to keep a small child safe. “My dear Marwan...my boy... I say to you, ‘Hold my hand. Nothing bad will happen.’”



The Dream of the Celt
Mario Vargas Llosa
Translated by Edith Grossman
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012)

On August 3, 1916, Sir Roger Casement—an Irish nationalist, now stripped of his knighthood—was hanged by the British for high treason. What a waste. Casement, considered by some to be the father of human rights investigations, had previously exposed atrocities committed against indigenous peoples by rubber barons in both the Congo and the Amazon jungle, and the details in his written reports in 1905 and 1911 still make difficult reading. *The Dream of the Celt* is historical fiction based on voluminous research, and the author brings Roger Casement back to life as a complex and passionate man.



Dear Church Mouse



Dear Church Mouse,

I'm a bit of a hot head, and I offended another parishioner when I sounded off about something. Now the person is polite but icy. How can I get forgiveness from this former friend?

Sad & Lonely

Dear *Sad & Lonely*,

Church Mouse has good news and bad news. First the bad news. You can't "get" forgiveness; you can only ask and graciously accept the person's response (which may change over time). Now the good news. You sign yourself sad and lonely. Could it be that your sounding off tends to alienate people? If so, turn your attention to that trait. Why not make an early New Year's resolution to zip things up? (And don't forget to pray.)

Dear Church Mouse,

I keep hearing and reading things that sound like a call to evangelism. In other words, I'm supposed to "bring people to Jesus." Seriously? Hasn't the church learned anything over the years?

Resistant

Dear *Resistant*,

I hear you and to tell you the truth, evangelism is cheese I don't eat. I wish Christians would concentrate on how they themselves live and not on how others ought to be. I think it was St. Francis who said "It's no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching." Let's walk the talk together!

Dear Church Mouse,

On behalf of the Wardens I would like to respond to a number of questions you've received and will address them with single response because your writers sought information on funds raised through the Diocesan *Our Faith Our Hope* (OFOH) campaign and their usage, especially as related to the "Opening Our Sacred Space" initiative.

As stated in the last Advent issue, in 2014 our parish commissioned Black and Moffat Architects to conduct a design feasibility study for our facilities, and that firm's 54-page report contains options for our church at Yonge and Heath streets. But things changed after the report was commissioned; Canon Robertson (now Bishop Kevin) put his name forward to Synod for consideration as a Bishop late in 2016, and when he was elected, he resigned as our Rector in December 2016. That prompted a year-long leadership search, culminating in the appointment of Cheryl Palmer in January 2018.

During the search for a new Rector, the Management Team, consisting of the Wardens, Treasurer, and priest(s) in charge, felt that undertaking any major projects would be ill advised and best deferred to when we had a new Rector in place. Hence, "Opening Our Sacred Spaces" was suspended for the time being.

On a personal note, I was excited to accept the opportunity to be a warden at vestry in February 2016. My motivation in putting my name forward was to invite the parish to participate in a process of renewal, starting with an exercise to define our future. In my opinion, understanding our future direction is a fundamental first step to any significant work on our facilities, especially on the scale envisioned by the Black and Moffatt report.

A critical component of any visioning/strategic planning process is strong and consistent leadership, and we are now blessed with Cheryl Palmer as our Rector. She brings a wealth of experience and wisdom to the parish including (but not limited to) parish renewal, such as the successful renewal undertaken at her previous parish, St. Clement's.

One of Management Team's priorities is the visioning project—*Charting Our Future with Christ*—that is intended to inform a strategic plan to put our hopes and dreams into action. Without trying to bias the outcome of that process, I anticipate that it will identify the need for changes and updates to our parish home, and if I am correct, this is where the funds available from the OFOH initiative *and* the work undertaken by the "Opening Our Sacred Spaces" working group will be critical.

In addition to the *Charting of Future with Christ* visioning process, we have made a few other modest investments using OFOH funds. These include topping up grants received from the Diocese to develop and deliver new adult Christian education initiatives, new youth ministry initiatives (e.g. Children's choir), and the accessibility updates to the church property

On a separate note, I would like to speak to another of the priorities of Management Team for 2018. This is the establishment of the Parish Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board presents a greater opportunity for parishioners to be engaged and informed in the decision-making process for the parish. The Advisory Board is a vehicle for better flow of information between the Management Team and the Parish. The Board was established at Vestry in February and has met twice this year.

The success of the Advisory Board is based on participation, and, as such I would encourage all parishioners to come out to vestry in February and participate in the governance of our parish.

If you have any questions regarding the OFOH Funds, Our Sacred Space initiative, or the Advisory Board please reach out to me or one of the other wardens with your questions.

Finally, I encourage each and every member of the parish to participate in *Charting of Future with Christ*. The success of this process will be judged by the level of participation in the development of our communal vision. All our voices should and must be heard. I ask each of you to sign up to participate in the small group visioning sessions so that you can be heard and be part of the vision.

Thank you.

Andrew van Nostrand,
Rector's Warden



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**WANTED
CONTRIBUTORS AND
PHOTOGRAPHERS
OF ALL AGES AND STAGES.**

Would you be willing to take on a specific assignment or take pictures? Is there something you would like to research and write about? Do you have a constructive comment? Or, is there an activity or initiative that you would like others to join? If so, please contact us at spiritus@christchurchdeerpark.org

Submissions should be 250 words long and in Word format, and all submissions will be subject to edit.
Copy deadline for the Lent edition is Thursday, February 7, 2019.

A big thanks to all of the contributors for this issue of *SPIRITUS*.



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