

RECTOR'S REFLECTION

Last week, while preparing for the Lenten study, I was looking for suitable music for the reflection. On YouTube, I listened to various videos that people had made of hymns and songs being sung. I settled on "Trust and Obey" (which also happened to be the title of the chapter we were studying last week). While it was downloading, I read some of the comments that people had left. Most were from obviously religious people, like "Praise God!" or "This is my favourite song, thank you for singing it so well". But there were some from people who were apparently rather militant atheists. Their comments were more along the lines of "The sooner religious people are wiped off the face of the planet, the better society will be" or "What a bunch of morons who are dumb enough to believe in stupid fairy tales".

Now, the first rule of internet use is "Never read the comments." I used to read them under news stories on the CBC website and then gave up because it seems that the people who comment make a full-time job about being belligerent and ignorant. In internet-speak, these people are called trolls. If you break the first rule, then you should definitely not break the second rule: "Never feed the trolls". In other words, when someone leaves nasty comments, just ignore them. If you engage with them, it's not going to be pretty. I broke the first rule, but I left the page before I was tempted to engage. You just can't have a debate with people online—the anonymity of the online world makes people say things they might say in person and just leads to frustration and upset.

When I encounter people who say the sorts of things I quoted above from the anti-faith commenters, it often gives me pause. Sometimes, when I feel pessimistic about the church, I wonder if the demise of religion that they so fervently desire might just be right around the corner. I always wonder what made them so angry. And I sometimes wonder what it would be like to turn back the clock to a time when it seems people of faith were not so ridiculed as we are today.

But then I read this week's passage from 1 Corinthians. St Paul writes, "The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." To those who choose to see Scripture as a collection of silly stories because they have a perception of the way the Church has used the Bible in the past that borders on the ridiculous, the message we proclaim can appear rather foolish. In a world that values scientific, empirical proof of anything in order for it to be considered true or valid, the claims of people of faith stand in opposition to that value. It would seem that those who ridicule people of faith are not a new breed: they were also around in the time of Jesus and Paul.

Our faith is profoundly counter-cultural, and there are few ways that this is more neatly put in Scripture than the way Paul puts it: "God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength." This is not a scientific fact. It is a statement of faith. I cannot prove it to you but I can tell you that I believe it to be true. And because I believe it to be true, I find hope in the story of the cross. Sometimes our journey of faith is difficult and it's not made easier when people throw stones at us, but as we take each step on our journey, I pray that we may be strengthened as we take up our cross to follow Jesus. In this Lenten season, as we mark the forty days our Lord spent in the wilderness and prepare ourselves for the Easter feast, let us renew our faith and walk with our Lord not only to the cross but to the empty tomb. The world may wish to see an end to religion, but just as they could not keep Jesus down, neither will they keep us down if we keep our eyes fixed on the Lord, our strength and our redeemer.



THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF TYENDINAGA

*To be a Spirit-filled and life-giving place where strangers
become friends and friends become disciples.*

SUNDAY CELEBRATION

Sunday 8 March 2015
Third Sunday in Lent

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS

9:30 a.m.

All Saints' Church, 1295 Ridge Rd

PARISH PRIEST

The Venerable Brad Smith
rector@parishoftyendinaga.org

QUEEN ANNE PARISH CENTRE

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Mission Statement

Our mission, for the glory of God in Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit, is to:

- Celebrate all that God has done for us through worship and witness with others.
- Respond to our call to be disciples of Christ by sharing our faith, rooted in the Word of God, with others and encouraging others to become followers of Christ through word and action.
- Practice good stewardship of our human, financial and environmental resources, working to ensure that all of God's Creation is viable for future generations.
- Grow ourselves and others by reaching out to our communities, following Jesus' example of generous caring, giving, and welcoming.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lenten Study—Continuing Wed 11 Mar until 1 Apr. We will gather from 5-7 p.m. in the QAPC. Each session will begin with a simple potluck supper and continue with the study. There are still a few books available at the front of the church if you'd like to attend. To read this week: Chapter 3 (starts p 25) and the commentary for chapter 2 (starts p 82).

Easter Flowers—If you would like to place flowers in memory of loved ones, please give your list to Sandra John or Cathie Vick and donation to Edgar Tumak by Sun 22 Mar.

Friendly Manor Service—The next ministry team visit for the Friendly Manor is Thu 26 Mar at 10:30 a.m. In winter weather, please bring indoor footwear.

Food Bank Donations—We gather non-perishable food items on the first Sunday of each month and donate them to the Food Bank. The Food Bank is experiencing a significant increase in the number of families it serves so this is a material way we can help our neighbours. The next Food Bank Sunday is 5 Apr.

Rectory Rental—The rectory is available for rental on a weekly basis as a cottage for tourists, fishermen, etc (and may be rented for shorter periods in the off season). Check out the website at cottagesincanada.com/bayofquinterectorycottage and please tell your friends who might need a place to stay!

Camp Hyanto—Registrations are now open. Visit <http://ontario.anglican.ca/wp/camp-hyanto/> to register online. In the spring Dialogue, parishioners across the diocese were invited to provide financial support to Camp Hyanto in order to assist with the provision of Christian camp ministry to youth. If you are interested, info can be found in the newspaper (page 3) or online (go to the website above and click on the tab that says "2015 PAG form").

PRAYERS THIS WEEK

Anglican Communion

The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
Parish of Meru (Kenya)
The Rt. Rev'd Charles Mwendwa

Diocese of Ontario

The Rt Rev'd Michael Oulton
Parish of Oxford
The Rev'd Robert Porter

Companions

St Ann's Episcopal Church, Amsterdam, the Very Rev'd Neal Longe
HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace, the Rev'd Canon Denis Mulliner

Parish of Tyendinaga

Lay Ministers of Communion
Pray for the families of: William H. Brant; William J. & Marilyn Brant;
Winston Brant; Lisa & Rodney BrantFrancis;
Daniel, Lindsay, Colson & Hudson Brumwell

READINGS FOR SUNDAY 15 MARCH

Numbers 21:4-9
Ephesians 2:1-10

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
John 3:14-21

Stewardship Reflection

The Rt Rev'd Michael Pollesel

Jesus displays anger at the way in which people have used his "Father's house" for their own selfish ends. How do we, as faithful stewards, respond, when we perceive injustice in our world?

Financial Report

Weekly Need:	\$2,459
Last week's Offering:	<u>\$1,724</u>
Shortfall last week	\$ 735

Based on the 2015 budget and the number of identifiable givers, the following is what is required of each giver in order to meet our needs:

Weekly: \$40 Monthly: \$173