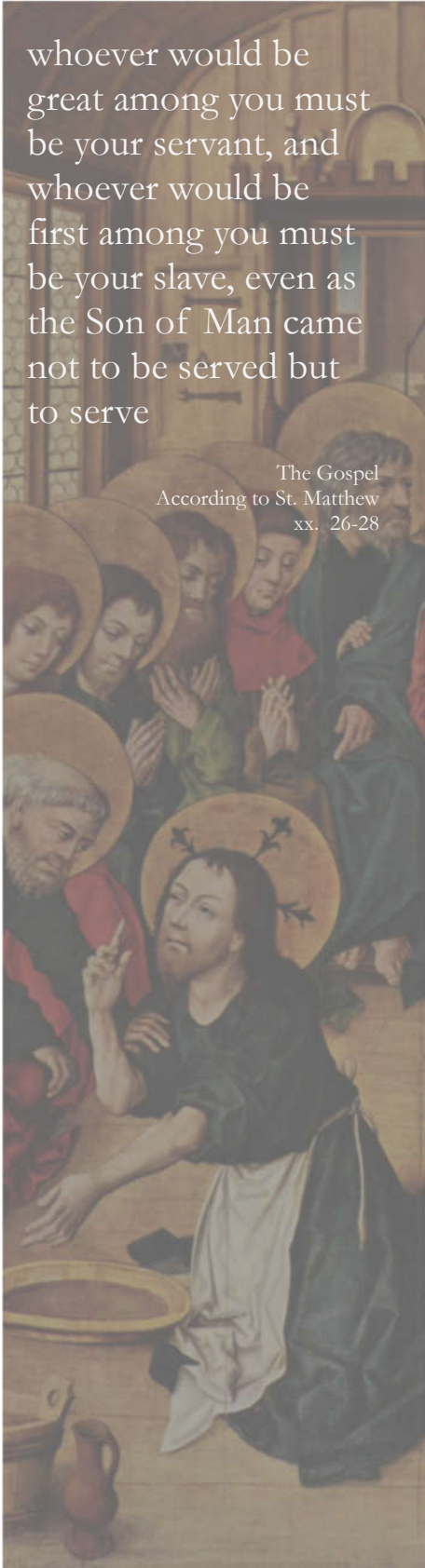


THE ORTHODOX ANGLICAN CHURCH

whoever would be
great among you must
be your servant, and
whoever would be
first among you must
be your slave, even as
the Son of Man came
not to be served but
to serve

The Gospel
According to St. Matthew
xx. 26-28



It seems as if it was only a couple of days ago that we began a new Church year, and now once again Christmas is upon us. I wish I was better prepared for the coming Christmas season but instead of feeling inadequate about that I am overwhelmed with a sense of joy for all of the blessings of this past year. By God's grace we have been able to empower many in their service to Christ, and grow the church here and abroad. After some time to think about it I believe this has been the most rewarding and satisfying year of ministry since my consecration to the episcopate. To all of those who pray for and financially support our work, thank you.

Since our last newsletter went out the 2019 OAC calendar was released. Our calendar for 2019 was put together by Canon Drew Darnell and Father Jason Hess. It can be downloaded on the resources page at: www.OrthodoxAnglican.us.

I have also been busy traveling on behalf of the Church the last few days. Sunday I preached and celebrated at our pro-cathedral, Monday I travelled to Washington D.C. to set apart a lay deaconess on behalf of the OAC India, and Tuesday we met with church leaders in Virginia who are looking at joining the Orthodox Anglican Church.

Saint Andrew's Theological College and Seminary has been an approved institution of the Orthodox Anglican Church for nearly five decades now. In recent weeks Canon Paul Hubbard announced he was stepping down as it's President. We are grateful for Canon Hubbard's service these last several years. The Seminary Board met several weeks ago and approved new administrators and faculty. The faculty and staff are all very busy getting things ready for the Spring Semester. We should all be grateful for the people who have worked so hard on behalf of the seminary in the past, and the present. Please keep the Board, Administrators, faculty, and students in your prayers. The seminary website will be updated very soon.

On behalf of Janet, and our family I wish you a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

May God bless you,
‡ *Thomas E. Gordon*



GODLY WOMEN ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM

THE VERY REVD WILLIAM MOUSER

In November 2018, Agence France-Presse reported that feminist theologians in Geneva Switzerland have published "A Women's Bible," the latest effort by feminists to reconcile their political agenda with the Bible's candidly patriarchal view of the sexes by reading feminist dogma back onto the ancient texts. However, Advent and Christmastide feature a woman as a primary character. The Virgin Mary brings to a climax a relationship between life-giving mothers and their savior-sons that stretches all the back to the beginning of the Biblical record.

Life-giving is an easily understood aspect of Biblical womanhood. What many fail to recognize, however, is the vital role which mothers have played in rearing sons who played vital roles as leaders and saviors for God's people.

Consider the following twenty life-giving women and the key men to whom they gave life (named in parentheses): Eve (Seth), Sarah (Isaac), Rebekah (Jacob), Rachel (Joseph), Leah (Judah), Tamar (Perez), Jochebed (Moses), Shiphrah and Puah (Moses), Miriam (Moses), Pharaoh's daughter (Moses), Manoah's wife (Samson), Hannah (Samuel), Naomi and Ruth (Obed and King David's line), Jehoshabath (Joash), Elizabeth (John the Baptist), Mary (Jesus), and Lois and Eunice (Timothy). Many of these women and their sons are well known; others are less familiar. All these women gave life to the men they brought into the world and released into the world as God's servants and as saviors for God's people.



The Virgin Mary, of course, stands at the pinnacle of this long line of life-giving mothers. In the list of 20 mothers just named, seven of them bore sons in the Messianic line: Eve, Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, Tamar, Ruth, and Mary. When God appointed Mary to give birth to the Savior of the World, she received a blessing greater than any of the women in the list above.

But, it would be a gross misunderstanding of Mary and her mission to think hers was a one-off calling. Her Son is unique, Mary is unique insofar as her Son is divine. But, to rear a savior of God's people is the zenith of a calling for Israel's mothers all the way back to the beginning of time. The majority of the twenty women named above did not bear sons in the Messianic line. But, they did bring forth sons who played pivotal roles in the history of God's people in their own day.

God used most of these women to nurture and train men whom God used as warriors in their own eras. Rachel's son, Joseph, was not in the Messianic line, but he had a great work to perform. Moses was not in the Messianic line, yet he had a monumental task from God—and it took five life-givers to prepare him for it!

Samson, Samuel, John the Baptist, and Timothy—none were in Christ's ancestral line, but their mothers produced sons with strategic roles in God's work. These mothers brought forth saviors and warriors for the spiritual battle of their day. The same spiritual struggles continue in every generation. The shape of the battlefield in any generation is determined largely by what the mothers did in the preceding generation.

Godly Women continued

Four of the lifegivers were not mothers at all! Exodus does not begin with God giving commandments on Mt. Sinai, but with the five women who gave Moses life: Jochebed, his birth mother; Shiphrah and Puah, the midwives; Miriam, Moses' sister; and Pharaoh's daughter. Moses' mother gave him birth and nursed him. The two midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, protected his life while willingly risking their own lives by disobeying Pharaoh's order to kill Israelite baby boys. Moses' sister, Miriam (the patron saint of baby-sitters) guarded him as she watched over him in the Nile. Pharaoh's daughter had compassion on him. Motivated by her own womanly, lifegiving heart, she heard a little baby in distress and instinctively wanted to protect him, to give him life and not death. The Princess may have been the only woman in Egypt equipped to train Moses for the life he eventually led. But it was her nurturing heart, not her regal power, which motivated her to do her historic ministry.

A survey of womanhood through the Bible reveals that every historical epoch in Scripture begins with women.

- The beginning of the human race features Eve and the birth of her first three sons.
- Exodus does not start with God and Moses on Mt. Sinai. It starts with five women giving Moses life, protection, and training.
- The era of Prophets and Kings does not begin with Samuel, Saul, or David. It begins with Hannah, struggling with her barrenness, praying, and bringing forth a son.
- The book of Ruth tells us the story of David's great-great grandmother and how David came to be born in Bethlehem, because two faithful women returned to their ancestral home in Bethlehem and raised up a seed to God.
- Matthew and Luke begin not with John and Jesus, but with Mary and Elizabeth. Just as the ancient text of Genesis foretold, the conquering warriors come through women. The story of spiritual victory starts with a woman. Jesus, through the Virgin Mary, is truly the seed of a woman, not the seed of a man. Through the Virgin Mother, the Serpent Crusher came, just as God's promise in Genesis 3 foretold.
- The Church is institutionalized in the pastoral epistles—1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus. In 2 Timothy 1:5, Paul says, "For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well." Throughout Church history, great pastors and Bible teachers were evangelized and trained by their mothers, grandmothers, and other lifegiving women.

The feminist theologians in Switzerland are looking into "the Women's Bible" to find what they suppose is true femininity. From the Bible, however, a chorus of women, headed by the Mother of Jesus Christ - proclaims the power of women to shape and direct future generations by giving life to godly sons who join their mothers to advance God's Kingdom.

When Mary brought our Savior into the world, her example - and all the examples of lifegiving women before her in the Old Testament record - show how godly women in every generation after them advance God's Kingdom by giving life and inspiring the missions of the godly sons.

The Very Revd William Mouser is the Rector of Saint Athanasius Anglican Church in Waxahachie, Texas, the Vicar General of the missionary diocese of the southwest, and the Academic Dean of Saint Andrew's Theological College and Seminary.

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The Orthodox Anglican Church, Office of the Presiding Bishop, 529 Breezewood Dr. Charlotte, NC 28262 USA



2019 Lenten Clericus

The 2019 Lenten Clericus of the Orthodox Anglican Church will begin the evening of March 7th and conclude at noon on March 9th. It will be held in Bryson City, North Carolina. We will be staying at Land's Creek Log Cabins where we have reserved 3 cabins and the large meeting hall. Room and Board will be provided at a cost of \$100. On-site space is limited so **you should register today**. If space is still available clergy from outside the OAC will be permitted to register in January. The Registration fee should be sent to The Orthodox Anglican Church, Office of the Presiding Bishop, 529 Breezewood Dr. Charlotte, NC 28262 USA.

THE ORTHODOX ANGLICAN CHURCH Important Dates in 2019

March 7-9, 2019 Lenten Clericus, Land's Creek Log Cabins, Bryson City, NC
May 17, 2019 National Council Meeting (11 AM EDT, Telephonic)
August 2-4, 2019 Liturgical Seminar for Deacons, St Phil's, Charlotte, NC
August 9-11, 2019 Liturgical Seminar for Priests, St Phil's, Charlotte, NC
Oct 4-5, 2019 Fall Clericus, St. Athanasius Anglican Church, Waxahachie, TX
Oct 6, 2019 Ordination & Holy Communion, St. Athanasius Anglican Church, Waxahachie, TX
November 1-3, 2019 Liturgical Seminar TBD

Social Media Quotables:

**“Pride and ambition
are the seedbed
of disobedience.”**

Prayer Book Vocabulary

Sore let: sadly impeded, very much grievously hindered, (see Collect Advent iv.)

Satisfaction: - fulfilling an obligation incurred.

Convenient: appropriate.

Holpen: past tense of 'to help'.

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