

THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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Mystery on the Road to Emmaus

The notion of Trinity entered Christianity through a fierce debate among theologians during the first 400 years after the death and resurrection of Christ. It arose in a time when the scientific world view was very different from ours.

What did the ancients mean when they declared that Jesus is “of one substance with the Father?”

For us, substance is a particular matter that has mass and space. That, however, was not the case for the early Christians. Their notion of substance meant something quite different. We are born tiny, as a baby; we become bigger and bigger, stronger and stronger. Over time the changes in our appearances are drastic. Our mother knows us as a baby and when we are fifty years old. She knows us when we have dark hair and when we have grey – or hardly any. Appearances change over a lifetime, nothing remaining the same. The ancients thought that there must be something that remains constant throughout all the changes in appearances, something immaterial that carries all the different material appearances. It is this that they called substance.

Let us then consider the appearances of God. The three appearances of the Trinity are interrelated to one another. After the Father created the universe, Jesus accomplished his earthly mission on earth, and then Jesus asked his Father to send the Holy Spirit in order to support and guide us. God, then, is a social entity. God's appearances have a relationship and are in dialogue with each other. And we are made in God's likeness.

What, then, does the ancient notion of Trinity teach us? That God

reveals Himself in very different ways. We may experience God working in us and in our environment in a multiplicity of ways. God, then, does not have a single face.



We could say that God shows Himself differently to a scientist, to an environmental activist or to an artist. To scientists He may appear as the source of matter and the laws of nature and also as the one who gave mankind the ability to formulate His laws. Einstein, for example, was well aware of this mystery. To activists, God may appear in the natural world, in the societies which we have established. That would explain their motivation to work for a better world. And God may show Himself to artists as the source of their inspiration, even when, in our own time, art may be bewildering to many.

God accompanies us without us realizing it. God is a mystery and which our eyes are kept from recognizing. But, then, sometimes, when we study nature or look carefully at what happens around us, or in us, we recognize the appearance of God in our lives. Do we recognize that God created nature? If so, why do we pollute? Do we recognize Jesus as the Christ? If so,

what is our attitude to refugees? Do we recognize the Holy Spirit working in us? If so, why aren't we inspired to keep the church relevant in today's society? God manifests Himself in many different ways. So He may appear differently to each one of us, even from one hour to the next. When we don't know what to do in some situation, we can pause, reflect and pray. Pray for the people involved, pray to do the right thing. God answers. Was it the Holy Spirit inspiring me? Some people would say, "No!" arguing that unconscious processes lead to conscious thought. Let us reflect when God walked with you, as Jesus walked on the way to Emmaus. Ponder those times when you missed God, when you felt Him near, or even, when you rejected Him. God's presence is among us today. Let us feel His awesome power, following the teachings of Christ. Let us be inspired by the Holy Spirit to be a witness and serve God and our neighbours now and in the weeks to come.

From a sermon by Geert-Jan Boudewijnse

The Good Samaritan

The story of the Good Samaritan was related by Jesus to a certain lawyer as a parable, that is, a story to teach a moral lesson. The object was to show what was true neighborly conduct; and this was the story.

“A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

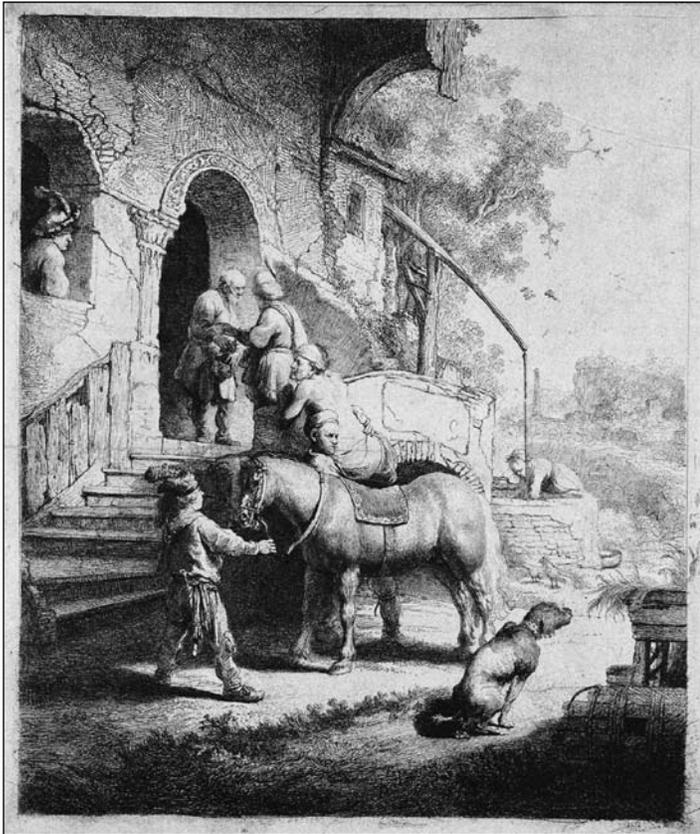
(continued overleaf)

(Samaritan)

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, ‘Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.’”

The point of the story is very plain, and when Jesus asked the lawyer which one of the three passers-by was a neighbor to the wounded man, he was forced to reply, “He that shewed mercy.” Then said Jesus simply, “Go, and do thou likewise.”

Though the scene of the story is laid in Palestine, it is the sort of incident which one can imagine taking place in any country or period of time. So it seems perfectly proper that Rembrandt, in representing the subject in an etching, should show us an old Dutch scene. The etching illustrates that moment when the Good Samaritan arrives at the inn, followed by the wounded traveler mounted on his horse.



The building is a quaint piece of architecture with arched doors and windows. That it was built with an eye to possible attacks from thieves and outlaws, we may see from the small windows and thick walls of masonry, which make it look like a miniature fortress. This is a lonely spot, and inns are few and far between. The plaster is cracking and crumbling from the surface, and the whole appearance of the place does not betoken great thrift on the part of the owners. On the present occasion, during the working hours of the day, doors and windows are open after the hospitable manner of an inn.

The host stands in the doorway, greeting the strangers, and the Good Samaritan is explaining the situation to him. In the mean time the inn servants have come forward: the hostler's boy holds the horse by the bridle, while a man lifts off the wounded traveler. About the dooryard are the usual signs of life. In the rear a woman draws water from a well, lowering the bucket from the end of a long well-sweep, heedless of the stir about the door. Fowl scratch about in search of food, and there is a dog at one side. Some one within looks with idle curiosity from the window into the yard. It is little touches like these which give the scene such vividness and reality.

There is also a remarkable expressiveness in the figures which tells the story at a glance. You can see just what the Good Samaritan is saying, as he gestures with his left hand, and you can guess the inn-keeper's reply. Already he has put the proffered money into the wallet he carries at his belt, and listens attentively to the orders given him. He may privately wonder at his guest's singular kindness to a stranger, but with him business is business, and his place is to carry out his guest's wishes. You see how the hostler's boy magnifies his office, swaggering with legs wide apart. Even the feather in his cap bristles with importance. This bit of comedy contrasts with the almost tragic expression of the wounded man. The stolid fellow who lifts him seems to hurt him very much, and he clasps his hands in an agony of pain. He seems to be telling the gentleman at the window of his recent misfortune.

To study the picture more critically, it will be interesting to notice how the important figures are massed together in the centre, and how the composition is built into a pyramid. Draw a line from the inn-keeper's head down the stairway at the left, and follow the outline of the Good Samaritan's right shoulder along the body of the wounded traveler, and you have the figure. This pyramidal form is emphasized again by the wainscot of the stairway at the left, and the well-sweep at the right.

To appreciate fully the character of the etching, one must examine attentively all the different kinds of lines which produce the varying effects of light and shadow. Below the picture Rembrandt wrote his name and the date 1633, with two Latin words meaning that he designed and etched the plate himself. This would seem to show that he was well pleased with his work, and it is interesting to learn that the great German poet, Goethe, admired the composition extravagantly.

With thanks to Angela Deslauriers



Self-portraits of the young and old Rembrandt

Mary = Anne; Isaac = Sarah; John the Baptist = Elizabeth;
Moses = Jochebed; David = Nitzover; Abel = Eve;
Ishmael = Hagar; Solomon = Bathsheba;
Samuel = Hannah; Jesus = Mary

A Mothers' Day Quiz / Answers

100 and Counting

I had the pleasure of attending the 100th birthday of Doris Leckie on March 26th held in the hall at St. John the Baptist Church.

Doris and her late husband Bob, who was our treasurer back in the 1990's, were long time members of our church. Doris moved last year to California to live with her daughter Annie and her family. It was decided by the family that she would celebrate her centennial in Pointe Claire where she had lived for so many years. Whilst living on Hampton Gardens she and Bob were loyal members of our congregation. Their three children Ross, Bob and Annie had already grown up and moved away to New Brunswick, Texas and California.

For this celebration the extended family all returned to Quebec to help Doris truly enjoy this memorable event. And what an afternoon it was as Doris greeted over a hundred well wishers representing all aspects of her life in this province. In addition to some St. J the B parishioners there were bridge players, members of the Lakeshore University Club, teachers from the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf (Doris was the principal there for many years) and many friends all gathered in the church hall! Being a hundred years young she had the ultimate honour of meeting and greeting everyone whilst sitting in the Bishop's tapestry covered chair (normally found in the church sanctuary). To my recall this is the first time that it was ever used for such an event!

The Women's Guild of the church had been asked by the family to cater part of the event including a variety of dainty sandwiches, delicious squares and to serve tea and coffee in our fine bone china cups from our silver tea/coffee services. Brenda Dewar, Marjorie Brayne and Shirley Storr did the honours pouring. Jane Bennett provided the vegetable platters, dips, crudités, scones served with clotted cream and a variety of jams. In addition there was a mound of mouth watering strawberries!!! The *piece de resistance* were the



two cakes that Jane made in honour of the occasion. After a short speech, given by Doris' son (Bob) and the hearty singing of Happy Birthday Doris deftly cut the first slice. The cakes were absolutely delicious!



Doris looked so well and to everyone present it appears that she is well suited to the Californian climate, although she admits she misses many dear friends here. Who knows perhaps she will be tempted to fly back this summer to reconnect yet again.

How wonderful that she was able to make the flight back to Quebec to celebrate this milestone anniversary and how fortunate we all were to be a part of her special day. We wish her continued good health and we look forward to seeing her in the not too distant future.

Valerie Delacrataz



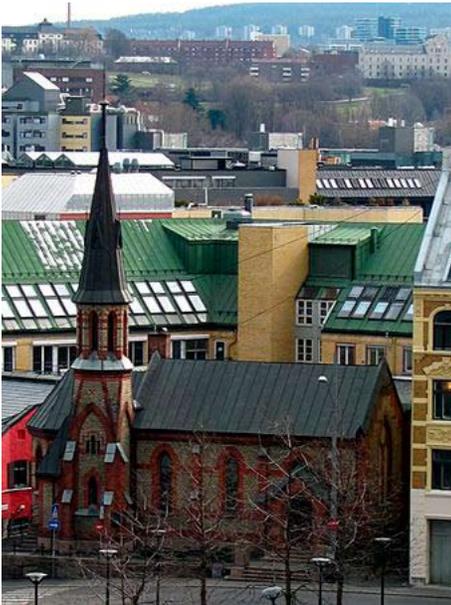
Life Lesson

A professor stood before his philosophy class. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. So the professor picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous, "Yes!" The professor then produced two cups of tea from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now", said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things... Your family, your children, your health, your friends, your favorite passions. Things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your home, your car. The sand is everything else... If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner to dinner. Play another eighteen. There will always be time to clean the house or fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities, the rest is just sand."

One student asked, "What about the tea?" The professor responded, "No matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a cup of tea with a friend."

With thanks to Margaret Paterson



Easter Celebration

The pictures at the left were taken on Easter Day at St. Edmund's Anglican Church in Oslo, Norway; this is the home church attended by my sister-in-law, Jennifer. Among other activities undertaken, Jennifer takes her turn arranging - and buying - flowers for the services week by week. This trait seems to run in the family! If you are interested in reading more about this congregation, the church's web site is: <http://www.osloanglicans.no/> DLP



Spring Cleanup



Looking For an Adventure

Giving brings adventure and happiness. And if you get right down to the facts, that is exactly what all of us are striving for. None of us likes a life filled with nothing but monotony, without any adventure whatsoever. With our gifts to the church, it is an avenue through which we share in the support of Christ's church at home and abroad, provide for the preaching of his word, the teaching of children and youth, as well as the very maintenance of the very building and institutional framework where these ministries are carried on, not only for ourselves but for our neighbours.



With this money we can venture, in a small way, into the lives of persons whom we have never met, but who nevertheless are members of the kingdom of God. We can reach out into our hospitals and help with the provisions for the care of the sick. We can go to a home for the aged and

bring food and shelter and bring a sense of security to the men and women who are living the last days of their lives. Through time, talent and money we can educate, heal and transform lives, which without ministry of Christ, would continue in total darkness and neglect.

In other words, this way we can enter into the kind of adventure that will not only bring a thrill into our own hearts, but also to the hearts of others. Is there any greater happiness that can come to us than this kind of happiness.

God has appointed you to be his good and faithful steward. He says, "If I give you a bible, make good use of it; likewise, if I give you a house and a car and money, make good use of them." "The cattle on a thousand hills are mine," says the Lord, in a beautiful verse from Psalms 50:10. The cars in a thousand driveways are mine, says the Lord. The TVs in a thousand homes are mine, says the Lord. The monies in a thousand bank accounts are mine says the Lord. Put my estate to good use, says the Lord. Manage it in my service by using it to serve the needs of others.

Carry this out and you will be fulfilled, you will be happy, you will be at peace. Trust me, says the Lord.

Paying For the Pump

A pastor was delivering his Sunday sermon exhorting the congregation to increase their offerings by putting more money in the collection baskets, when someone interrupted him. "But Reverend, you keep telling us that salvation is free, as the air we breathe and the water we drink. If that's true, then why are you always asking for more money?"

"Well you're right," said the pastor. "Salvation is free as the water you drink. But if you want water in the kitchen, somebody has to pay for the pump."

With thanks to Andre Hammond

Vicar's Vignette

Have We Lost Sight of God's Treasure!

As the Diocesan Pastor to the Lay Readers, I recently attended the Lay Readers Annual Retreat weekend, which was held at the Manor D'Youville in Chateauguay. The retreat offers lay readers from across the diocese an opportunity to get away from their regular routines and responsibilities and reconnect with one another. It is a time when they can worship and pray together, share concerns and celebrations, offer comment and ideas for the upcoming year, receive some teaching from a guest speaker, and relax a little in the comfortable and peaceful surroundings of the Manor and the adjoining nature center.



This year's speaker was the Reverend Jim Slack from Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Dollard des Ormeaux. Jim led the lay readers through a brief overview of the history of both the Lutheran and Anglican churches leading up to and including present day dialogue between both, and their shared ministry together.

During Jim's presentations I noted a comment that he had made about his relationship as a young boy growing up in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, with those in his home-town from other Christian denominations. He said that for him the denominational labels of these other Christian churches was more a label of introduction rather than one of judgment. As far as he was concerned the important distinction was not one's denominational affiliation, but the fact that they were all of the Christian faith. As a young boy it seemed to him that the church people of the town were generally of the same persuasion. They got along quite well and interacted with each other in a mutual bond of friendship and support regardless of denominational stripe. It was only as he got older and moved away to university that he encountered Christians from various denominations who didn't seem so hospitable. They held so tightly to their denominational distinctions that these distinctions became barriers to communion and community. What was once a label of introduction, at least as Jim understood as a young boy, had now taken on an air of judgment and division.

Lost was the important tie that binds, Christ. Encountered were man-made traditions and practices that seemed to override God's treasure, his message of reconciliation in Christ.

I am persuaded that our tendency to put man-made religious traditions and practices ahead of the Lordship of Christ is what causes us to lose sight of the scriptural imperative that Christ's body, the church, be ambassadors and stewards of God's message of reconciliation, first and foremost. As Paul reminds us in his Second letter to the Corinthians, "...if

(Continued on back page)

A Mothers' Day Quiz

Everyone has a mother but can you link the biblical persons in the list on the left to their mothers in the list on the right.

Mary	Jochebed
Isaac	Eve
John the Baptist	Hagar
Moses	Anne
David	Mary
Abel	Elizabeth
Ishmael	Bathsheba
Solomon	Nitzovet
Samuel	Hannah
Jesus	Sarah

If, like the Editor you need to cheat, the answers can be found elsewhere in this issue of the MESSENGER.

With thanks to Margaret Nicoll-Griffith

Punny Stories

Two boll weevils grew up in South Carolina.

One went to Hollywood and became a famous actor. The other stayed behind in the cotton fields and never amounted to much. The second one, naturally, became known as the lesser of two weevils.

Two vultures board an airplane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at them and says:

"I'm sorry, gentlemen, only one carrion allowed per passenger."

And for the kids . . .

Last night, I kept dreaming that I had written *Lord of the Rings*. My Dad said I'd been Tolkien in my sleep.

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little which made him rather frail and with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath. This made him . . . A super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

With thanks to June Mace



The Mouths of Babes

It was Palm Sunday and, because of a sore throat, five-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When his family returned home, they were carrying several palm branches. Johnny asked what they were for.

"People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," said his mother.

"Wouldn't you know it," the boy complained, "the one Sunday I don't go, he shows up!"

On Easter Sunday morning, as the minister was preaching during the Children's Minute, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's in here?" I know, a little boy exclaimed. "Pantyhose!"

A little girl in church for the first time watched as the offertory plate was passed around. When the sidesmen came near her pew, she said loudly, "Don't pay for me, Daddy, I'm under five!"

So You Think Gas Is Expensive

Why don't you compare its cost with some other common liquids which we buy from time to time.

Diet Snapple, 16 oz , \$1.29 ... \$10.32 per gallon!

Lipton Ice Tea, 16 oz , \$1.19 ... \$9.52 per gallon!

Gatorade, 20 oz , \$1.59 ... \$10.17 per gallon!

Starbuck's Regular Coffee 16 oz, \$2.10 ... \$16.80 per gallon!

Scope Mouth Wash, 1.5 oz , \$0.99 ... \$84.48 per gallon!

Brake Fluid, 12 oz , \$3.15 ... \$33.60 per gallon!

Pepto Bismol, 4 oz, \$3.85 ... \$123.20 per gallon!

Vick's Nyquil, 6 oz , \$8.35 ... \$178.13 per gallon!

And then richest of all:

Evian water, 9 oz , \$1.49 ... \$21.19 per gallon!

\$21.19 for a gallon of WATER!!

(Vicar's Vignette continued)

anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us." (2 Cor. 5:17-18; 20)

I dare say then that as ambassadors we as a church are obliged to draw upon all the ingenuity, creativity, talent, energy, diversity and gifts that God has graced us with, to do all that we can to be worthy representatives of the gospel and good stewards of God's gifts for the purposes of reconciliation.

Perhaps if we focus even more attention on ways of promoting God's message of reconciliation will in the long run translate into blessings that will enable St. J. the B. to remain one expression of church in Pointe Claire long into the future.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matt. 6:21)

Yours in Christ, Corne

