

At many funerals we make the odd distinction between mourners and non-mourners, but I suspect that that false distinction applies least of all here today. So you, close friends, students and colleagues, but above all else parishioners, I want to remind you that only those who mourn will be comforted. This day is an opportunity to gather and remember what is of first and last importance, that Christ died for our sins and to receive him in this holy sacrament. And in so doing it is an occasion to be recalled to what is of central importance and lasting meaning. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, ‘He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.’

We hope for what we do not yet see and so we wait for that with patience. And that Christian hope is not mere wishful thinking; it is the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul tells us in a marvellous phrase that we are saved by hope. Saved by hope. Surely we know something of being condemned to despair: so can we understand, do we know what it means to be saved by hope? Is this what we need to proclaim to our day, our culture, our neighbours: that we are saved by hope? The ground of our hope is of course our faith, for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. To Robert’s dear friends and especially to those who have been so remarkably loyal and caring, to the people of St. Mary’s and these Congregations and Parishes, I say, ‘be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.’

Jesus speaks to us today about our common hunger and thirst, that is, about our deepest longings and lasting desires. And he assures us that he can and will quench our thirst and satisfy our hunger. The same promise is there in the lesson from Revelation, ‘I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.’ Our desires, however confused and however inappropriately we have sought to satisfy them, our curiosity and craving, the hunger and thirst of our minds and hearts, are not some cruel trick meant to leave us perpetually frustrated and dissatisfied, rather they find their end and fulfillment in God. God made us for himself. The universal spiritual hunger and thirst of human beings is a witness to this. And God further excites this longing in us in Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit. Jesus reassures us and promises us that our longings, like our faith and labour are not in vain. ‘Seek and ye shall find.’ And we who have the first fruits of the Spirit know how God has planted an even greater desire and longing and hope for the

completion of his redemption in us.

Peter and the other Apostles summarize how Christians understand the common quest of human beings, what it is that we’re all looking for. In an astounding moment of recognition, perhaps at the moment not fully realizing what they were saying, they come to Jesus early in the morning, interrupt his prayers and say, ‘All men seek for thee.’ Everyone’s looking for you. And sometimes rightly, but mostly wrongly, we do. All men seek for thee.

It is God who planted in us the desire to know and to be known, to love and be loved, and who puts in our hearts and imaginations visions and dreams of peace and justice, of beauty and truth, of a new heaven and a new earth and the new Jerusalem.

In Psalm 27 this point is made so beautifully clear, “My heart hath talked with thee: ‘Seek ye my face’; ‘Thy face, Lord, will I seek.’” Moses, remember, had prayed to see God’s glory, but it proved impossible for him or any mortal. Yet God whispers in our hearts, ‘Seek ye my face’, and stirs up our longing to see him. The Christian Gospel is about the complete fulfillment of our hearts’ desires and all that we were made and long for. St. John reports the wonder of the Incarnation: what we could not see, we can now see: ‘we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.’ And this beholding is not just an outward seeing, it is an inward believing. It is those who see **and** believe who have everlasting life. ‘For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.’ And that glimpse of the glory of God **in our hearts**, which we know in the face of Jesus Christ, that inward believing, will be perfected above, in heaven. ‘For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.’ The Christian hope is that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Our journey is the journey of the wise men; we know God now by faith and are led onward through this earthly life until we see the vision of his glory through Jesus Christ. At the end of John’s Revelation, after all the images of judgment and glory, the blood and smoke, the gold and crystal, he puts so succinctly what is the end of the servants of God: ‘And they shall see his face.’

We are invited here today to come and believe, to draw near with faith, and to receive this comfort food that strengthens our hearts and satisfies our souls. But the sacrament we receive with our outward mouths is meant for the mouth of our hearts, the outward sign is full of inward grace, faith our outward sense befriending makes the inward vision clear, and we feed on him in our hearts by faith and with thanksgiving. We see **and** believe.

Father Thorne, whose generous care of you over the past year and in this time has been exemplary, asked me on Tuesday if I might suggest a hymn for today. I gave him no answer because I couldn't think of one, only hundreds. Father Crouse will be and has been remembered as an extraordinary priest and scholar and musician and he shared those gifts and vocations in and with these Parishes and this community, but for many of us he was the very humble church organist who accompanied the Happy Wanderers on the wheezy Cherry Hill organ, played for a full half an hour before every Evensong in Broad Cove, drowned out the furnace with the Yamaha in Petite Riviere, and at Nellie's happy instigation ransomed and redeemed St. Mary's organ, (just one of many instances of living out our Lord's command, 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost'). On this organ one Sunday morning at a baptism he introduced me to the very ordinary hymn with the refrain, 'loving him who first loved me', and which concludes, 'Singing, till thy face I see, of his love who first loved me.'

Our peace and joy are found there and here and everywhere in the knowledge and love of God, in knowing him who first knew us, in loving him who first loved us, through Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

So, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

And, 'The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.' Amen.



The Very Reverend Michael Hawkins, Bishop of the Diocese of Saskatchewan, lives with his wife and family in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. Bishop Hawkins previously served as Rector of two rural parishes in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (the Parish of Pugwash and River John 1988-1993; and the Parishes of Petite Rivière and New Dublin 1993-2001). In the Petite Riviere parish, Father Crouse served as parish organist during his tenure. In 2001 he moved to Prince Albert to become the Dean of Saskatchewan and Rector of St. Alban's Cathedral. He was elected Bishop in 2009, succeeding Bishop Anthony Burton.

Wednesday, April 6, 2011

5 PM Evensong in the King's College Chapel
with the King's Choir under the direction of Paul Halley

followed by a reception in the Senior Common Room

7:00 PM an address by Anna Swartwood

Doctoral Candidate, Princeton University
in the Haliburton Room, First Floor of A&A

"Painting and Devotion in Fifteenth-Century Italy."

All are welcome. Please plan to attend.

Both the Senior Common Room and the Haliburton Room are in the King's A&A in very close proximity to the Chapel. After 4:30 pm there should be plenty of parking available in the King's College Quad or behind the King's Residences.

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