

The Anglo Catholic Inner-City Experience

Robert A. Gallagher, OA



The place and time where all these ideas and relationships come true is in the Eucharist. Here is the pattern and the power. Here in the Offertory is the time and place to offer all that each life takes on in its special environment of poverty or wealth, of sickness or health. Here, as Charles Williams would say, is the time and place for an exchange – an exchange of my burden for yours, an exchange of our burdens for the light yoke of Christ, an exchange of sin and penitence for forgiveness. And in the Consecration of the bread and wine is an exchange of our bodies for his body, of the Cross for Resurrection, of captivity for freedom, of death for life, of all else for joy.

-Paul Moore in The Church Reclaims the City, 1964

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This document is an outline of the Anglo Catholic experience in the inner city during two periods – from the 1860's into the early 20th century and from the 1950's into the 70's. These were both times when young Anglo Catholic priests were attracted to minister in the inner city areas of England and the United States. I'll be using my own experience at Saint Elizabeth's Church in South Philadelphia as a touchstone in exploring the history.

1860's into the early 20th Century The beginnings of the slum priest tradition

From the 1860's into the first part of the 20th century, in both the United States and England, a number of parishes were started or claimed by Anglo Catholic priests. I'll comment on two of those parishes and suggest broader themes that were common in many such parishes.

Saint Alban the Martyr, Holborn

Beginning in the 1860's at Saint Alban's, Holborn, Father Alexander Mackonochie and Father Arthur Stanton engaged one of London's slums. The church's consecration included the proclamation - "Free for ever to Christ's poor." This was both a comment on the growing practice of not charging a pew rent which had been one source of income for churches and a statement of parish direction.

A non-Christian contemporary wrote about Fr. Mackonochie, 'It is not so much admiration or reverence they feel for him, as personal affection.... Mr. Mackonochie's parishioners know that he is among them to do his duty by them thoroughly and conscientiously, and they feel that they can rely upon it being done.' The spirituality, which found Jesus in the Eucharistic bread and wine, sent Mackonochie out to find Jesus in the people of the dreary alleys and courts of his parish. 'The special virtue in the movement of which Mr. Mackonochie was the leader, was that it brought light into the dark places, and beauty and orderliness and peace before weary eyes and harassed minds, and sweet and ennobling music to ears accustomed to discordant curses, and screams of anger, and cries of pain. That was what Mr Mackonochie's Ritualism meant for the poor. What it meant for the rich was a certain mystical reverence and tenderness for their wretched human brethren in whom they now saw shining the divinity of Christ. This enthusiasm for humanity was the essence of Mr. Mackonochie's Ritualism.'

-From the parish's current website



Arthur Stanton



Saint Alban's



Alexander Mackonochie

Saint Elizabeth's, Philadelphia (founded 1888, closed in the mid 1990's)



The Bishop wanted to have churches that served the expansion of the city south. "The district was unattractive. The land was swampy. Beyond it still further south there were truck farms and pig pens." The area was a working class community and, in a couple of decades, increasingly Italian.

By the first years of the 20th century the parish had a steady 800 communicants. A strong catholic spirituality had been established at Saint Elizabeth's that was grounded in the spiritual discipline of the Companions of the Holy Saviour who now lived in community in the clergy house. There were strong ministries of evangelism, pastoral care, and education.

Themes

The parishes they could get or the parishes they wanted?

These parishes, located in poor and working class areas, were not the plum assignments for which many clergy sought placement. It's often not clear to what extent they ended up in the hands of Anglo Catholic priests because those clergy wanted to give

themselves to the challenge and to what extent it was the only places to which they could secure positions.

The fight for Catholic practice and beauty

Fr. Stanton at S. Alban's, when a visitor objected to the smell of incense, "Well," said Stanton, "there are only two stinks in the next world: incense and brimstone; and you've got to choose between them."

The struggle over beauty in liturgy was not simply about candles on the altar, or vestments on the clergy. These things pointed to what the Catholic faith was all about. And that terrified some people. To use incense in reverence first of the Sacrament and then of the Holy People of God, was to claim God's presence among us in that sacrament and in one another. This wasn't just about matters of taste but of reality; of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, of the power of adoration toward the Blessed Sacrament, and of the church as a "wonderful and sacred mystery."

Some of the restoration of Catholic practice came by the persistent, even stubborn, efforts of Anglo Catholic priests. Some came out of practical, pastoral need. For the first time since the Reformation a daily Mass was begun in the Church of England at Saint Peter's, Plymouth in 1849. It was done because the sisters serving those dying of cholera asked to be allowed to receive communion daily so they might be strengthened for that ministry. During the same outbreak at St. Saviour's, Leeds, they began to reserve the Blessed Sacrament so the sick and dying might easily be communicated. The pattern was repeated during the work of the Sisters of St. Mary in Memphis in 1878 during the yellow fever epidemic.

Religious Orders

There were two primary forms that emerged in the relationship between inner city parishes and religious orders. One was that of "mission priests", the other of women living in community as sisters.

Mission Priests - In "The Vision Glorious" Geoffrey Rowell writes, "They felt that the ordinary parochial equipment of a rector and curate, or perhaps a solitary incumbent, provided for thousands of perishing souls, was most sadly inadequate." In England, the Society of the Holy Cross, and the Society of Saint John the Evangelist, developed out of a renewed commitment to priesthood and this need for a new approach in the cities and new working class areas. They assumed that the need was for priests who would live in community and under rule, who knew how to preach, and who would go to parishes in need of their services.

At Saint Elizabeth's - In 1891 the **Companions of the Holy Saviour (CSSS)** was established. The first members of this early religious order included William Webb, rector of St. Elizabeth's, Maurice L. Cowl, the curate and William McGarvey, who was later to become rector.

The Companions promises included:

- to rise each day not later than seven o'clock
- to recite the Daily Office of the Prayer-Book
- to celebrate the Holy Communion at least twice each week
- to make a daily meditation of fifteen minutes and to read a passage from a spiritual book
- to make a sacramental confession at least once each month;
- to cultivate a spirit of poverty

The community's purpose was to cultivate a spiritual life in those who were engaged in active work, mostly in parishes. An early member wrote – "The primary aim of our Congregation is purely spiritual. We desire to be conformed to the likeness of the Son of God. It is for the accomplishment of this end that we pray, meditate, recite our offices and fulfill all the requirements of our Rule."

When I arrived at St. Elizabeth's in the mid 1970's the clergy house was still divided into small cells to accommodate a community of priests.

Women Living in Community as Sisters - Religious orders for women began to be reestablished in the middle of the 19th century. The early groups lived in community, under rule, and engaged in some form of service such as nursing or work with prostitutes. John Mason Neale helped established the Society of St. Margaret in 1855. Neale's vision was of a community of sisters trained in nursing and available to parishes within a twenty-five mile radius. Sisters played heroic roles in working from city parishes during epidemics in England in 1849 and Memphis in 1878.

Persecution – Becoming a Fanatic

Anglo Catholic priests were pressured by bishops, mocked in newspapers, and in England, taken to court over ceremonial practices. Lawyers would argue in court over candles on altars, genuflections, and chasubles on priests. At St. Alban's and later at St. Peter's, London Docks, Fr. Mackonochie had been suspended by the bishop and at one point not paid. From Saint Alban's web site – "for Mackonochie it was nothing less than the outward signification of ultimate truth. Because of that he was prepared to do his work against the almost permanent background of law cases, which finally wore him out and brought his work at S. Alban's to an end. ... The catholic renewal of the Church was further fortunate in having in Mackonochie tenacity and apparent imperviousness to opposition, which was only short of fanatical. His portrait hangs in the Brooke Street Clergy House now, the face sad, determined and thin, but the jaw line rock-like.



At Saint Elizabeth's – The McGarvey Schism, May 1908

Many members of CSSS and the clergy at Saint Elizabeth's began to drift further and further away from the Episcopal Church. They had started to look to Rome to define doctrinal and liturgical matters. When the Episcopal bishops made changes in the marriage canon and provision for what was called an "open pulpit" that became the occasion to leave the Church. Several seceded from the Church and "went to Rome." Others remained loyal to the Church and the Companions.

There is a story that the group said a mass in St. Elizabeth's in the morning, and in the afternoon went to St. Charles R.C. Seminary in Overbrook and made their submission to Rome. Father Ward was the only Companion left at St. Elisabeth's, he remained there until his death. There were around twenty priests, not all from CSSS, who were part of the succession. (Note: The Episcopal Church at that time had around 5400 clergy). There were then rumors of a conspiracy to lead all Anglo Catholics into the Roman Catholic Church. The Companions still exist within the Episcopal Church and still seem uneasy with the relationship.

The issues that so aggravated McGarvey and the others now seem rather unimportant to most Anglo Catholics. McGarvey wrote – “The Episcopal Church has been changed, and will never again be what it once was, or what it once appeared to be. The change, which will be apparent more and more as time goes on, has been accomplished by the passage of measures so revolutionary in their underlying principles and logically so destructive of all that heretofore has been supposed to be distinctive of the Episcopal Church, that we who are identified with the Tractarian, or High Church Movement, are face to face with a situation the seriousness of which cannot be exaggerated. Of these revolutionary measures, the chief is the canon providing for ‘the open pulpit.’ ” What was the change? General Convention changed the canons to allow Protestant clergy to preach in Episcopal parishes on the invitation of the rector and with permission of the bishop.

The “Gay Parishes”

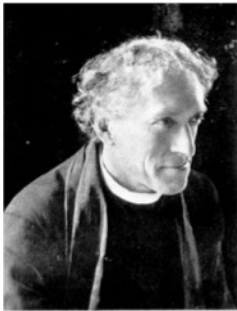
Ted Mellor wrote – “Saint Alban's still exists. The old church is gone, destroyed by incendiary bombs during the Second World War, but a new building of equal size and proportion was opened a few years later. The “young men of nineteen or twenty” still attend its services, I am told, and are still looked down upon by the comfortable Philistines in more “respectable” parishes. In his *Glorious Battle; the cultural politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism* John Shelton Reed has written a delightfully entertaining book, but it is one that seems to me, at least, to be always just missing the point. He spends a good part of a chapter talking (very discreetly) about these “young men,” their “aesthetic” sensibilities” and their “sublimations”. It never seems to occur to him that gay men (let's use the word!) flocked to Anglo-Catholic parishes like St. Alban the Martyr in London and St. Mary the Virgin in New York, among others, for the simple reason that there and, until very, very recently, only there could we find “a resting-place, a sanctuary, and a home.”

At Saint Elizabeth's – Until the early 1970's the parish never had a married priest. Priests living in the St. Saviour's House at first were members of the Companions of the Holy Saviour. Later they were single men, sometimes living in small informal communities. When I arrived in the mid 1970's what I discovered was that the primarily working class parish was aware of, but not very curious about, the sexual orientation of the clergy. The parish was black and white, singles and married, gay and straight. Before people talked about diversity

as a value Saint Elisabeth's and many other Anglo-Catholic inner city parishes were living the mystery of diversity in unity. What most marked many of these parish churches were things such as the Liturgy, the way in which people accepted and loved one another, and the syntheses of spirituality and justice.

Influencing the Social Order

For some Anglo Catholics the beauty and order of the liturgy and the theology was congruent with a conservative viewpoint in politics. But the aspect of the movement that was most apparent in the inner city parishes was a progressive or radical understanding in which the beauty and order of the Mass was to be reflected in honoring the beauty of all people and shaping a society that tasted of justice and equality. Anglo Catholic socialism was an expression of that tendency.



Conrad Noel: "The Red Dean" - In Leonard Pepper's, "Conrad Noel" (part of a series in 1983 celebrating the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Oxford Movement) he ends with this question - "How can the Church truly be the sign of the coming of the Kingdom of God?" It's a question that both Anglo Catholic conservatives

and socialists might be willing to share. It's the question that Pepper sees as embedded in the life of the parishes served by Fr. Noel and other priests. Here's what he wrote about Noel, "It was his conviction that the Church of God could be a sign of a new society, that same for which socialism was also working. Within the church and around it Noel hoped to create the image of the renewed world which the gospel promised. Song, dance and drama would cause the image to materialize, drawing out of people the gifts which they had forgotten they possessed." Fr. Noel will always be associated with the parish of Thaxted in north Essex. He served there from 1910 until 1942.

Conservative in Theology - Radical in Sociology - John Newman as an Anglican priest, and later as a Roman Catholic cardinal, spoke for the conservative grounding of the Movement. He affirmed much that was present in the liberal and progressive spirit, "so much that was good and true: the percepts of justice, truthfulness, sobriety, self-command, benevolence"; he also spoke of its dangers "that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another." Newman, and the Anglo Catholic slum priests, would share a fear of the results when faith is seen as simply a matter of taste and is relegated to the private life of people with no implications for society.

In 1933 W.G. Peck wrote "The Social Implications of the Oxford Movement." Peck saw the Movement's view of social life as grounded in an incarnational, sacramental, and Trinitarian context.

- The doctrine of the Trinity affirms that the personal – social principle is God's nature and that a person's spiritual life was to be found in that principle.
- The sacramental life of the church sets forth the principle of a co-operative community in which society is thoroughly and completely personal, and personality is thoroughly and completely social. The Eucharist is the redemption of our social life.

In the Concluding Address of the 1923 Anglo-Catholic Congress, Frank Weston, Bishop of Zanzibar, connected the church's social witness to the Blessed Sacrament. "If you are prepared to say that the Anglo-Catholic is at perfect liberty to rake in all the money he can get no matter what the wages are that are paid, no matter what the conditions are under which people work; if you say that the Anglo-Catholic has a right to hold his peace while his fellow citizens are living in hovels below the levels of the streets, this I say to you, that you do not yet know the Lord Jesus in his Sacrament. ... If you are Christians then your Jesus is one and the same: Jesus on the Throne of his glory, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus received into your hearts in Communion, Jesus with you mystically as you pray, and Jesus enthroned in the hearts and bodies of his brothers and sisters up and down this country. And it is folly – it is madness – to suppose that you can worship Jesus in the Sacraments and Jesus on the Throne of glory, when you are sweating him in the souls and bodies of his children. It cannot be done."

The 1950's into the 70's

Saint Augustine's, Lower East Side



St. Augustine's from the Old Slave Gallery



The Lower East Side

The Lower East Side, in 1959 had an outbreak of gang violence. That August there were gang "rumbles" that resulted in two dead young people. For several years there had been a truce among the gangs. Fr. Kilmer Myers of Sr. Augustine's Chapel had been involved in the negotiations that brought about that truce. Now that it was broken he changed the way the parish would celebrate its patronal fest. In full vestments, with cross and banners, incense and hymns, the congregation moved in solemn procession through the streets in a prayer that the killing would stop, and that city officials would see the young people of the neighborhood with the eyes of compassion rather than punishment.

On another occasion when Father Myers heard that the gangs were about to fight he got Trinity Parish (the wealth mother parish of St. Augustine's) to charter buses to take the gang members off to mountain resorts for a cooling off period.



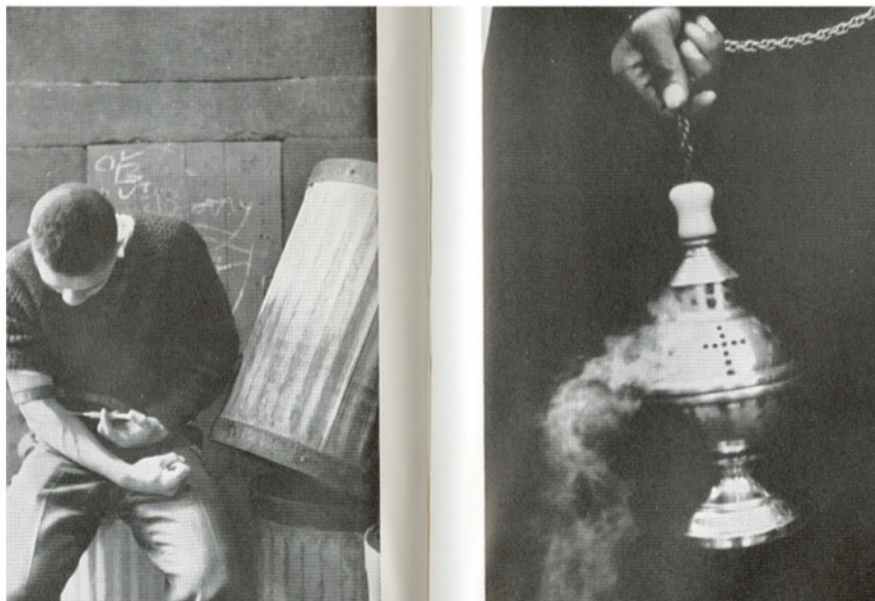
Confirmation at St. Augustine's



The Church Fair Gets Under Way

Grant Gallup on Kilmer Myers - "he was a tall handsome man in a cassock, and before long knew that he was a very quiet and soft-spoken man, aristocratic looking and kindly." Fr. Myers was ordained a priest in 1940. Before coming as vicar of Saint Augustine's he served as an Instructor at Berkeley and General Seminaries, a rector in Buffalo and as a Navy Chaplain. Later he was Director of the Urban Training Center in Chicago, Suffragan Bishop of Michigan, and Bishop of California. His book "Light the Dark Streets", and the witness of priests such as Paul Moore, and Robert Pegram inspired a generation of seminarians and urban priests.





In Fr. Myers' "Light the Dark Streets" this image was used to illustrate the choice facing young people. It may be a 1950's version of Fr. Stanton's statement about the use of incense, "Well, there are only two stinks in the next world: incense and brimstone; and you've got to choose between them."

In Light the Dark Streets, Father Myers wrote on what a parish is about and the role of a priest in the parish, "The story of every parish should be a love story. ... One possible definition for a parish is that it is God's way of meeting the problems of the unloved. This meeting between God and the unloved, the unwanted, takes place in the preaching of the Word, in the Sacraments, in the social life of the parish made possible by the climate of acceptance which is engendered by those who have been baptized and confirmed in the Catholic faith. One of the main tasks of the parish priest is to train the militant core of his parishioners in such a way that they understand as fully as possible the true nature of a Christian parish."

Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia - the 1960's and early 70's

The Church of the Advocate is located in North Philadelphia. This is largely an African American community that is poor and struggles with all the social problems common in many poor areas.



Stokely Carmichael at the Advocate

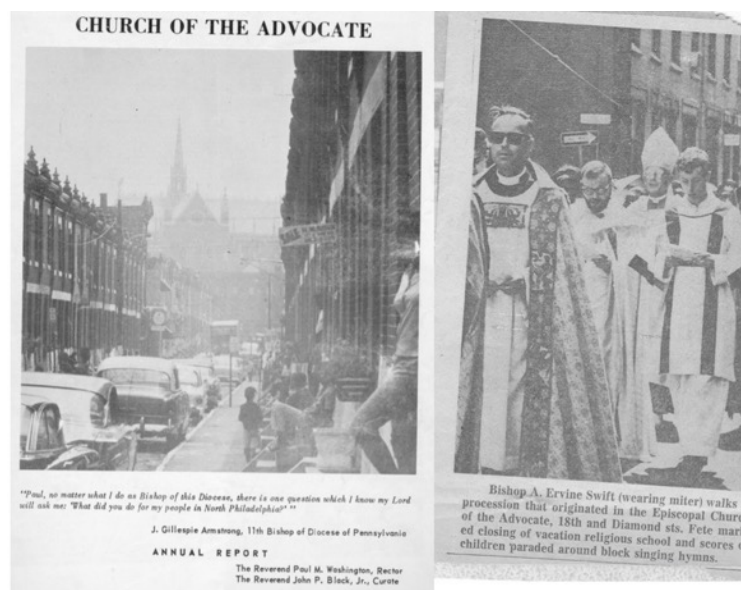


The ordination of the eleven

Father Paul Washington – I never heard Fr. Washington refer to himself as an Anglo Catholic. I had the feeling that he saw too many clergy, black and white, who took on that identity as being narrow and preoccupied with the kind of religion that Amos condemned. But at the Advocate the Eucharist was celebrated with great dignity and all the beauty of the Mass, gained since the Oxford Movement, was on display. I made my first confession there at a side altar, first came to appreciate the Daily Office, learned to genuflect in the presence of the Sacrament, to show reverence toward others, and first began to see the Eucharist in terms of God's vision for a new and better city.



Paul Washington was born in Charleston in 1921, served as rector of the Church of the Advocate from 1962 - 89 and died in 2002. He was at the Advocate for 25 years and established a reputation as a gentle, thoughtful, and persistent man of compassion and justice. During the civil rights and black power movements when there was nowhere else for gatherings to be held, he would allow them to meet at the Advocate. Stokely Carmichael spoke early in the black power days, the National Black Power Conference met at the church in 1968, and in 1970 he hosted the Convention of the Black Panther Party, in 1974, the church was the site of the ordination of the first eleven women to the priesthood.



Father Washington said he "wanted the Church of the Advocate to be known as a church of compassion, a church of love, a church that responded to human need."

Advocate Communities Development Corporation was established by Christine Washington, Paul's wife. ACDC constructed multimillion-dollar projects, rehab and new construction for those in need. Over 400 units of housing have been added to the North Philadelphia community.

The first woman consecrated as a bishop in the Episcopal Church, Barbara C. Harris, was a member of the Advocate and was ordained priest at the church in 1980. Ms. Harris was the Rector's Warden in 1974 and served as crucifer at the historic ordinations of the first women priests that year. She was the Interim Rector when she was elected Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of Massachusetts in 1988.

At the Eucharist one Sunday, Father Washington had just begun the sermon, when there was a shout from the middle of the church – "He stole my purse!" Suddenly the pulpit was empty and Father Washington was racing for the door after the thief. He caught up with the man at Susquehanna Avenue. The purse was turned over, the man went his way, and Paul was back in the pulpit finishing the sermon.

In his last sermon at Church of the Advocate in 1987, Father Washington said that, soon after he arrived at the church in 1962, "I heard God speak to me. It wasn't anything like the prophets might have heard, a voice from above. I heard God speak to me through the voices of the people who came to my church. They said they were hungry, cold, homeless, oppressed, brutalized and exploited. And I knew it was God telling me to do something about it."

Saint Elizabeth's – The 70's



Father Harris, CSSS

When in 1975 I was appointed to be the vicar of Saint Elizabeth's Father Robert Harris, CSSS, was saying the Wednesday morning Mass in the Mary Chapel (then still called S. Saviour's Chapel). He had been rector of the Church of the Annunciation in North Philadelphia for many years and was now retired. His ministry with us was the last remaining connection of the parish with the Companions of the Holy Saviour. He was always very gracious but I think it was when he realized that I was going to allow women priests to celebrate in the parish that he decided to retire from the mid week Mass. He was a kind and devoted priest but this may have been just too much change to absorb.



High Altar

Mary Chapel

Holy Family Altar

Worship had always been the center of life at Saint Elisabeth's. The pattern during most of my time as vicar was to celebrate two Sunday Masses. One was in the morning at 10:30 a.m. The other was at 7:00 p.m. in the evening. The later Eucharist served people who commonly worked Sunday morning – a police officer, a worker at the Philadelphia Inquirer, and a nurse were frequent attendees. Evening Prayer was said with a small congregation Monday through Saturday.



When I was asked by the bishop to consider St. Elizabeth's he encouraged me to think about helping to close the parish. Once I got there I fell in love with the people, the neighborhood and the church building. I decided to see what could be done with the place.

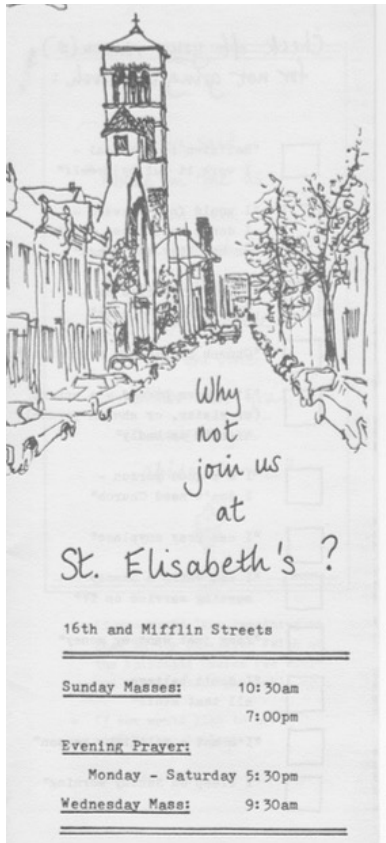
My first challenge was getting clarity about whether the parish had agreed to have me be the vicar. I was in my second Sunday of covering the Sunday Masses when I finally

asked – “Well, do you think you’ll ask me to be your priest.” The response was “We just assumed that you were our priest.” What a bunch of introverts we were!



The second challenge was helping people organize themselves to strengthen the parish’s life and ministry. I asked, “Who’s on the vestry.” Robert looked at Don and said, “I think you’re on the vestry.” No one knew. That proved to be fortunate because it allowed me to suggest that we operate with a temporary “vestry” of any member who was willing to come one hour early to Mass so we could figure out what we wanted to do. They agreed and we ended up with 10 people who meet every Sunday for two months. Together we developed an approach to develop the parish – in its inner life, in relationship to the neighborhood, in its hospitality and attractiveness to potential members.





Saint Elizabeth's offered a different world for some people in South Philadelphia. There was Catholic liturgy and devotion along with the freedom to experiment in one's prayer life. There was spirituality and justice. There was orthodox faith approached with open minds. African Americans, whites, and Asians formed the Eucharistic community.

Membership growth was largely organic. Someone brought a friend, a parent with children in the day camp started coming to Mass, and the parish reputation as carrying about the community attracted others. We also would advertise. Members would distribute thousands of leaflets to let people know who we were.

Themes

Influencing the Social Order

Anglo-Catholic parishes in the inner city were like any other parish in that community was nurtured, suppers took place, and the sick and dying were ministered to. But in many of them their experience brought forward the desire to change the society that was causing the suffering of poverty.

So at the Advocate some members engaged in the civil rights movement, Fr. Washington involved himself in a variety of efforts to promote justice, and the parish became a meeting place for groups that could find no other place to welcome them. As the decade came to an end the Black Power movement found support and a home.

Saint Elizabeth's in the 70's was involved in supporting efforts at community organization, feeding the hungry, offering educational programs, and running a summer day camp for children. At one point we were surprised to learn that the

community organizing work we were part of was creating the only community-based group in South Philadelphia that was outside the control of the city's Democratic Party. Over a period of time we were a significant force in helping three neighborhoods around the parish become organized.

Team Ministry

During the 70's team ministries became a popular structure for inner city parish work. This was driven in part by a shift in the broader culture toward collaborative effort. It was also rooted in the same difficulty inner city priests experienced a hundred years before – the task was complex, lonely, and stressful.

At St. Elizabeth's – The South Philadelphia Team Ministry

Most of the parishes in South Philadelphia joined in a team ministry that was partly initiated from within but largely based on an initiative from the bishop's office. Bishop Brooke Mosley, the assistant bishop, met monthly with the team clergy. There were six parishes involved, most coming from a catholic perspective. In addition to the clergy meetings the team had occasional gatherings of lay leaders. The parishes of the team had an agreement to consult the others during a clergy search process. People from the other parishes would interview the primary candidates for a

position and offer their impressions to the parish (and the bishop if it was an appointed position). One outcome of this process was that Mother Gerry Wolf joined the team as the vicar of Saint Mary's, Bainbridge Street. Some years later Gerry became bishop of Rhode Island. One of her recent activities was that during a sabbatical she spent several weeks disguised as a homeless woman to experience something of what the poorest experience.



Bishop Wolf

Class

In the earlier period of inner city work there were examples of class issues that illustrated the lack of awareness many good priests. One example is the advice given to the clergy to remember to gather the servants to join in Compline each evening. I'm told that one of the priests that followed me at St. Elizabeth's showed an open disdain for

working class culture. He complained about plastic on treasured furniture and people drinking beer. Those of us coming from working class families were more at ease with the way things were, even if we had learned to drink red wine and keep our feet off the furniture.

Formation of Young People

Here's the description by Fr. Grant Gallup of his two summers at Saint Augustine's – "For two summers, it turned out, I worked with Kim and other members of the summer staffs--flying squads of students like myself--and the devoted people and their priests in the exciting ambience of the Lower East Side of New York City. We lived a common life--sharing Eucharist and our other meals each day, had rooms in the old settlement house that was St. C's. As a member of the summer staff I learned and taught handicrafts to children and youth from poor families in the housing projects nearby, took them on outings and educational tours, and learned first hand from Father Myers, Father Wendt, and other priests there the style and elements of liberation theology that were never then taught in classrooms. Most of the summer staff were white students, but we worked and prayed and partied and danced with our Black and Latino counterparts in the neighborhood and learned of liberation from them."

During the 60's at the Advocate young people came from parishes all over the country each summer to help in the summer day camp. They also found themselves registering voters, picketing for better schools, and teaching Black history.

In 1964 there was the Mississippi Summer Project, what later was called Freedom Summer. This was a civil rights effort to expand black voter registration, organize a "Freedom Democratic Party" that would challenge the whites-only Mississippi Democratic party, establish "freedom schools" to teach reading and math to black children, and open community centers where indigent blacks could obtain legal and medical assistance. In June James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner who were part of that work were missing and after a 44 days search their bodies found. Pam Parker (now Chude Allen) one of the college students at the Advocate in the summer of 1963 was now going to join the project knowing that the three civil rights workers were dead. The connections between what was happening in Philadelphia, Mississippi and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania felt exceptionally strong during those few months. The Sanctus of the Mass in which we proclaimed the connectedness of all things took on a new sacramental meaning for many of us. Just recently I came across material on the web that Pam had written about her summer in Mississippi.

I have been told all my life
that I cannot sing.
But the thin brown-skinned man
at the front of the church
has told the audience,
"If you can't reach the note,
sing louder!"
and I am singing
Oh, freedom! at the top of my lungs.



Pam (now Chude)
in Mississippi

I think it was that same summer that I was with others from the Advocate on a CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) picket line in front of the Main Post Office building. As usual we had made decisions in advance about who would risk being arrested and who would stay out of jail to continue the protest. I was to stay out. The problem came when all those who could really lead the singing had been hauled off by the police. I was clearly the senior person left on the line (all of 20 years old). So, it was up to me to keep the singing alive, I must have heard the same voice in my head as Pam, "sing louder."

In the 70's Saint Elizabeth's offered a "Summer in the City" program that had college students from wealthier parishes in the diocese come to South Philadelphia to live and work. They lived in community, shared meals, said the Daily Office, worked in the day camp, and reflected on the experience they were having.

These are examples of something that was widespread in the Episcopal Church from the 50's into the early 70's. Every summer hundreds of young Episcopalians were exposed to a different world, lived in community, and prayed and worked together. Most of these parishes were Catholic in liturgy and devotional practice. For many young people it was their first exposure to two new cultures – one that was poorer and darker skinned and a second that was an engagement with transcendence and the relationship between the Eucharist and justice.

These programs were lead by the inner city parish and involved a fair degree of independence for the young person. How different that is from what has become common – suburban parishes sending carefully chaperoned groups to another part of the country or another country.

Shaping the Church

The church issues that were being confronted by Anglo Catholics were rather different from the earlier struggles over ceremony and practice. I'll mention two: the commitment of the church to the city and the place of gay and lesbian people in the church. On the first Anglo Catholics tended to take the same position – we need to "stay

in the city." On the second they split ranks, as they had on the question of the ordination of women.

Stay in the City - While still *at St. Elizabeth's* I wrote a small booklet, *Stay in the City*, Forward Movement. It was part of a larger movement among inner city priests. Our sense was that the Episcopal Church was abandoning the city. That it was doing that under both liberal and conservative bishops. A review of parish closings during the past 40 years showed that this was more than a "feeling." In Philadelphia alone we had closed 40 parishes in the city in 40 years (1940 - 1980). The pace was regular with twenty being closed from 1960 - 1980. In response there were actions taken at diocesan conventions and in some cases by individual bishops to turn things around. The trend did slow for several years but has since reasserted itself.

The church continues to close city parishes while at the same time saying how much it cares for the city and the poor. My own read is that we are up against three forces: 1) Thinking in terms of "congregations" rather than "parishes" with an assumed relationship to real human communities beyond the congregation itself. This is a failure of sacramental and incarnational understanding. 2) Allowing financial concern to override mission, a failure of Trinitarian understanding. And 3) diocesan leaders without the necessary persistence and patience, a failure of virtue.

The experience we had at Saint Elisabeth's, in other Anglo Catholic inner city parishes, and shared by the Lutherans in Philadelphia, was that when we gave ourselves to the people of the parish and the neighborhood, we got healthier and we grew in membership. Most of these parishes were small by any standards. By the time I left the parish in 1981 our average attendance was forty-six people. To arrive at that we had grown steadily for six years. Attendance had increased by almost 10%/year, baptized members had gone from 58 to 105.

The place of gay and lesbian people in the church - Statement of the House of Bishops in 1977 "Concerning Holy Matrimony": Both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, the understanding of sex is rooted in the conviction that the divine image in humanity is incomplete without both man and woman. Hence, the aim of sexuality, as understood in Christian terms, is not merely satisfaction or procreation but completeness. Interpersonal completeness -- 'The two shall become one' -- is the ancient prescription, a union of differences. This does not mean simply genital differences, but all the differences, biological and cultural, that distinguish male and female all gathered into the symbol of 'two shall become one'. The biblical understanding rejects homosexual practice. Heterosexual sex is clearly and repeatedly affirmed as God's will for humanity It is not clear from Scripture just what normality attaches to homosexual orientation, but the Christian message of redemption and sanctification one of graceful acceptance leading to graceful wholeness for all people. The Church, therefore, is right to confine its nuptial blessing exclusively to heterosexual marriage." The following year they made a statement restricting ordination to the married and the celibate.

Years after his work at Saint Augustine's, in 1977 as Bishop of California, Kim Myers addressed the House of Bishops speaking to the undertone that he saw in the culture and mirrored in the church: "The model for humanness is Jesus. I know many homosexuals who are radically human. To desert them would be a desertion, I believe, of our Master, Jesus Christ. And that I will not do no matter what the cost. I could not possibly return to my diocese and face them, these homosexual persons, many of whom look upon me as their father in God, their brother in Christ, their friend, were I to say to them, "You stand outside the hedge of the New Israel, is you are rejected by God. Your love and care and tenderness, yes, your faltering, your reaching out, your tears, your search for love, your violent deaths mean nothing! You are damned! You have no place in the household of God. You are so despicable that there is no room for you in the priesthood or anywhere else." There are voices in this country now raised proclaiming this total ostracism in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. What will be the nature of the response to this in the House of Bishops?"

I expect this battle to continue for generations. Because both conservative and liberal Anglo-Catholic parishes include large numbers of gay and lesbian members there may be some special role for us to play in the coming decades.

The incarnational reality of the presence of gay and lesbian members will continue to confront these parishes. The seriousness that we as Anglo-Catholics, liberal and conservative, give to scripture and tradition will not allow for easy answers but presses us to deep prayer and thoughtful theology. And that may offer a gift to the wider church.

Gloria Deo, homo vivens

Father Washington once told a reporter that when he entered the ministry, he was "resolved that black people would become what God wanted them to be. So that was my message: 'Stand up! Become what God made you.' " The words are a theme we hear again and again in the life of inner city Anglo-Catholic parishes – It's the gospel call to maturity in Christ, it's the "I am" of God and humanity, it's in George Eliot's "It is never too late to be what you have been", and it's in Irenaeus' "the glory of God is a person fully alive."

That's a proclamation the world longs to hear and believe. It's for all of us, for all sorts and conditions of people. It's what I believe the inner city Anglo Catholic still offers – in Eucharist, in community, in beauty and in compassion. I love the way John Orens put it in his "The Anglo Catholic Vision."

In the secret places of their hearts, modern men and women are seeking themselves. They sense, although they cannot believe it, that they have enduring value, that there is more to themselves than their employers, their accountants, their government, or even their families can possibly know. What the world craves is the assurance that there is "a splendor burning in the heart of things."