



Ascensiontide 2019

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF THE WEST

Diocesan Digest



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A Word from the Bishop

*By the Rt. Rev. Dr. Felix C. Orji, OSB,
Ordinary, Anglican Diocese of the West*

Archbishop & Mrs. Ademowo Missions Fund (AAMF)



The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

I am very excited to bring to your attention an important project that I believe will tremendously benefit and enhance the mission of our Diocese. Here it is: the Diocesan Board approved the creation of Archbishop & Mrs. Ademowo Missions Fund (AAMF) some months ago.

Our plan is to officially launch this **Archbishop & Mrs. Ademowo Missions Fund (AAMF)** at our 2019 Synod in Toronto, Canada. The purpose of this Fund is to support our mission to assist church planters, plant new churches, and reach out to people in need in the United States, in Canada, and abroad. As the Bible says:

On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do (Galatians 2:7-10).

Paul the Apostle preached the Gospel and was always eager to help the poor in accordance with apostolic practice. He had no problems doing both, and neither should we.

Here are a couple of Scripture passages that remind us of our calling to care for the needy in addition to preaching the Gospel:

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:16-18).

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but

deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world (James 1:26-27).

Believing the Gospel, preaching the Gospel, and caring for people are imperatives for the Church. We ask you to come prepared to contribute generously to this Fund on Thursday night at our opening Dinner. This Fund will enable our Diocese to fulfill the Great Commission and help those in desperate need of both the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the temporary comforts of this life.

Warm Regards,

The Rt. Rev'd Dr. Felix Orji, OSB
Diocesan Bishop
Anglican Diocese of the West



Exegetical Notebook – Luke 1:5-80

*By the Rev. Canon Mark D. Wilson
Rector, St. Patrick's Church, Las Cruces, NM*

Initial Exegetical Insights¹

In attempting to understand the range of characters and the multiple settings introduced at the beginning of Luke's narration of his orderly account, the density of Jewish religious customs and practices with which Luke was acquainted struck me. Luke expresses a degree of familiarity with the Hebrew Scriptures by his recording of the angel Gabriel's reference to the "spirit and power of Elijah" in the seventeenth verse of his first chapter.² Luke 1:17, in itself, is enigmatic, and Green's insights are interesting.³ Comprehending the "orderly"

connections Luke makes at the start of his narrative required a careful reading to answer several initial questions.

Interpretive Questions

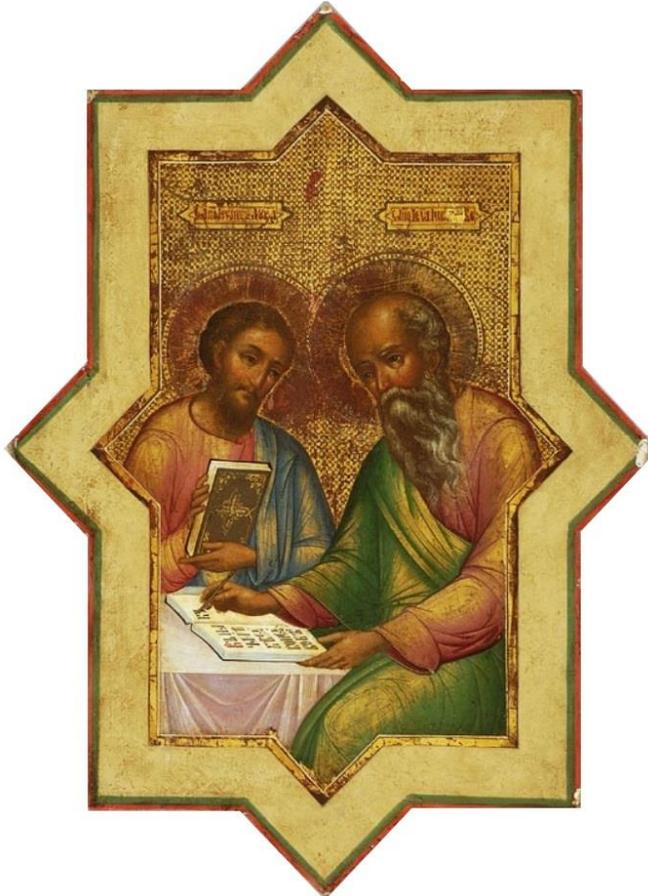
1. Why would Luke include Elizabeth's pregnancy with Gabriel's Annunciation to Mary in a narrative that appears to culminate in the birth of Jesus?

¹ This is the second part of a multi-part series. See previous issues for previous articles in the series.

² See e.g. 1 Kings 17-19

³ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), Kindle edition, 77.

2. Does Luke include these supernatural events to provide immediate signs to affirm that “no word from God will ever fail”?⁴
3. What prompted Mary to visit Elizabeth? Was it Gabriel’s statement in Luke 1:36?
 - a. **Exegetical Insights from Green:** Green suggests that Mary’s visit was either “apparently unmotivated” or, perhaps, there was “theological motivation” in Luke’s narration to depict Mary’s “journey” as a redemptive-historical “going” to the fulfillment of the sign given by Gabriel.⁵ This consideration led me to wonder further.
4. What significance could there be in Luke highlighting that Mary “hurried” (Luke 1:39 NIV)?
 - a. **Exegetical Insights from Green:** Green’s thorough exploration of potential allusions to the Old Testament in this large portion of Luke’s Gospel leads me to compare Mary’s haste with that of the hurried nature of the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt for their journey to the promised land (Exodus 12:11, 31-39).
5. How is this abrupt start to the author’s (Luke’s) narrative with its rapid change of settings related to the introduction in Luke 1:1-4?
 - a. **Exegetical Insights from Green:** Green draws our attention to Luke breaking from his narrative to address us, as readers, with an interpretative affirmation at the conclusion of



Luke 1:66, so we, as readers, may realize that “God is actively present in these events.”⁶ Understanding Luke’s perspective while reading about the unfolding of these events as they were foretold, combined with Luke’s numerous allusions to the Old Testament, provide the context of the things fulfilled among them (Luke 1:1 NIV). Luke interprets these events as God fulfilling his ancient

promises to his people as recorded in the Old Testament. Luke states, “For the Lord’s hand was with him” while he notes that everyone else was wondering (Luke 1:66 NIV). In essence, while characters in his narrative question the meaning of events, Luke interprets them for us, and Luke’s interpretation helps us understand the main character in his narrative.

6. Who are the main characters of this narrative? Who or what is the focus of this supposed “orderly account”?

a. **Exegetical Insights from Green:** God is the central character in Luke’s narrative as Green regularly reminds.⁷ Nevertheless,

Jesus also begins to take center stage; because, “Jesus is repeatedly characterized in relation to God.”⁸

7. What is the intended relationship of all these characters and settings from a Jewish priest serving in the Jerusalem temple in Judea, to a young betrothed woman of Nazareth in Galilee with Quirinius as the Syrian governor all under the Roman Emperor Augustus?

⁴ The Holy Bible NIV.

⁵ Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 94-95.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁷ See e.g. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 50, 52, 55, 136, 145, 154-156.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 138.

- a. **Exegetical Insights from Green:** Green succinctly draws these relationships and settings together to highlight that, for Luke, what is happening with these Jews under the Roman imperial rule will have implications for the entire world.⁹

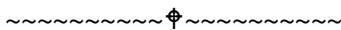
General Exegetical Summary

With Luke 1:5, we begin Luke's narration of an orderly account of things fulfilled. This section culminates with the birth of Jesus in Luke 2 with an angelic pronouncement to shepherds, which is nothing less than the evangelistic proclamation of the Messiah promised to not only deliver Israel but possess international dominion (Luke 2:11). That the birth of Jesus takes place in the days of Caesar Augustus while Quirinius was governor of Syria contributes to the subtle understanding that his birth will be significant for the world beyond the Jewish people.

The opening supernatural scene of Zechariah serving in the temple with Gabriel's appearance combined with the description of Elizabeth's disgraced barrenness hint at Luke's familiarity with Second Temple Jewish religious practices and the Old

Testament. Affirming Luke's familiarity with the Jewish religion is his recounting of Jesus' circumcision, presentation at the temple, and annual Passover pilgrimage to Jerusalem. As Luke's narrative progresses, we sense a story saturated with the Hebrew Scriptures that contain God's ancient promises now being fulfilled in this orderly account.

As we increasingly understand the connections between all the different characters, we understand that God is behind the scenes working out his purposes. Zechariah prophecies in the Holy Spirit about the significance of the relationship between his son, John, and Mary's, son, Jesus. While God is the sovereign orchestrator, the focus of Luke's narrative now shifts to Mary's son, Jesus, who is characterized by his relationship with God and the fulfillment of God's purposes. The dual testimonies of Simeon and Anna at Jesus' temple presentation offer further proof that Jesus is Israel's long-awaited Messiah who will redeem Jerusalem and be a "light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:22-40 NIV). Nevertheless, Jesus submits to his confused, albeit, religiously devout parents in the unprestigious town of Nazareth where he "grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52 NIV).



Walking in the Footsteps of Paul

By the Ven. Scott Seely

Rector, Three Streams Anglican Church, San Antonio, TX

Diocesan Archdeacon for Mission and Church Planting

This past March, I had the privilege to lead twenty pilgrims to Greece and Turkey to walk in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. We began our trek in Macedonia (Northern Greece) where Paul entered Europe on his second missionary journey after receiving a vision from the Lord (Acts 16:9). In

Philippi, we walked on the ancient Roman military road—the *Via Egnatia*—that Paul and his companions would have traveled on to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Greek people. We were truly walking the Mission Road. Along the *Via Engatia*, between Philippi and Thessalonica, the

⁹ *Ibid.*, 124-125.

mountainous ranges in the mornings are covered by a thick layer of fog. It dawned on me that Paul and his missionary team would literally be walking by faith and not by sight as they walked down this road.

This is something that can only be gathered by being present on pilgrimage. I have yet to find any suggestion of it in a commentary! But the point is clear: as Christians, we participate with the missionary Spirit as sowers of the seed of the Gospel. We participate with the Spirit to sow that seed within a particular soil: a person's life, a city or town, or like Paul, even provinces.

One of the highlights of the trip for me was the ruins of Ephesus in Turkey. We traveled in luxury on a cruise boat through the Aegean Sea; Paul did not have that luxury. As I walked down the marble streets of what was mission-central for the early Church, I was walking where Paul, John, Timothy, and others had walked. I preached in the agora of Ephesus, where Paul would have made and sold his tents. I was overwhelmed by the historicity of our faith, and I saw the impact upon the little flock I was shepherding as

we stood there. Our God is great, His Gospel is great, and we are participants in His great mission. This was the message Ephesus spoke to us.



Although the trip was centered around Paul's ministry, we made one stop to the Isle of Patmos, where John wrote Revelation. We arrived at sunset. What I had imagined in my mind as a barren, deserted landscape was completely mistaken. Patmos is one of the most beautiful places I've every seen. I had the honor of delivering a sermon not only my group, but also, to another group near the Cave of the Apocalypse in the still darkness of night. My experience of going down into the grotto where John supposedly received his vision was weighted with awe and mystery. We were in a holy place.

Leading people on pilgrimage, whether to the Holy Land, or to Greece and Turkey, is a great way to make disciples of Jesus Christ. It allows you to pastor folks where Biblical events occurred. The Scriptures come alive for people in a way they never have before. There's nothing quite like being on pilgrimage.



Liturgy Lessons: Anatomy of a Collect

*By the Rev. Canon Isaac J. Rehberg
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Diocesan Canon for Liturgy*

One of the first things a visitor will notice in an Anglican parish is that we are overtly and intentionally liturgical. For some Christians, such an overt liturgy is a new experience, but when we learn the liturgy and allow our prayers to be shaped by it, the liturgy can be very helpful in our spiritual formation.

Some of the liturgy is the same each service. When it comes to the liturgy for Holy Communion, we traditionally call the portions that do not change the “ordinary” of the liturgy. Other parts of the liturgy change from week-to-week or even from day-to-day. These parts are traditionally called the “propers.” For most Communion services, the propers are the readings and psalms assigned for the week or day. The major exception to that rule are the prayers known as the “collects.”

The collect (pronounced *KOL-ekt*), gathers or collects the prayers of the congregation, especially as relates to the theme of the week or holy day. The collect can be an excellent way to discern the theme of the Sunday or holy day, as well as how the various readings are supposed to fit together. One can think of the collect as a “thesis statement” for the liturgy of the day.

Most of the collects in the Book of Common Prayer are quite ancient, developing alongside the historic one-year lectionary between the fifth and ninth centuries. Some were added or modified by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer when he developed the first Book of Common Prayer at the time of the Reformation. Others were added or revised over the centuries, especially during the twentieth Century liturgical reforms.

A typical collect includes four parts: the address, the petition, the oblation, and the doxology. These parts

are often (though not always) separated by semicolons in the Prayer Book’s text.

The address is the invocation of God in the collect. It often will include some attribute of God that is relevant to the theme of the week or holy day. There is usually some sort of address in a collect, though they are sometimes very short. A small minority of collects (like the Collect for Aid Against Perils in Evening Prayer) do not have a discernable address.

The petition describes the object (i.e., that for which we are asking) of the prayer. The petition is usually the main body of the collect. Every collect has a petition.

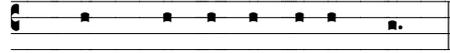
The oblation describes the reason or result of our petition. It describes why we are asking God for what we desire in the collect, usually after the word “that.” Not every collect has a definite oblation. In fact, the most common exception to the general collect format is the absence of an oblation.

The doxology concludes the prayer, typically either with a trinitarian or Christological formula, followed by “Amen.” Every collect includes some sort of doxology.

This typical formula can be seen in the Collect for the Fourth Sunday After Easter in the traditional rendering of the text:

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true

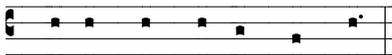
*joys are to be found; through Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen.*



In the address, we speak to God as the only one who can bring order to our “unruly wills and affections.” In the petition, we ask that he allow us to love those things he commands and desire the things he promises. In the oblation we describe the effect of him granting that request: that our hearts would be fixed on Him (“where true joys are to be found”) even among the unpredictable, changing circumstances of life. In the doxology we conclude with praying it “through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

As the presider or celebrant at Communion, our phrasing when reciting or chanting the collect can help communicate the focus of the prayer to the congregation. This is especially helpful when chanting the collect using the late medieval pattern of using the *metrum* in the address and doxology (i.e., the beginning and the end), and the *flex* at the petition and oblation (i.e., the middle sections).

The *metrum* (or cadence) walks down from the “reciting tone” a half step, followed by another full step, and then returns to the reciting tone at the last emphasized syllable:



...af-fec-tions of sin - ful men;

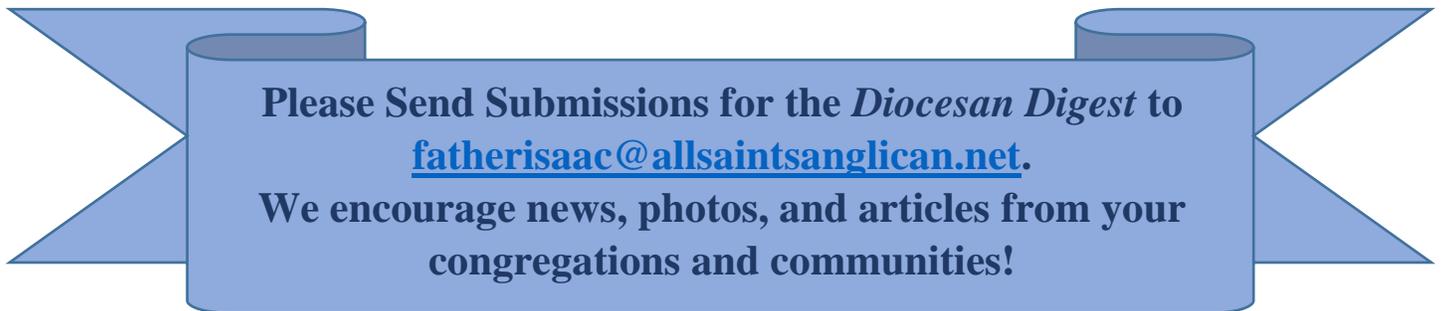
The *flex* moves from the reciting tone down a half step on the last emphasized syllable:

... where true joys are to be found;

(For the full notated collect, see below on the next page)

In our typical Sunday cycle, we have a collect assigned for the week, beginning on Sunday and then used in the Offices for the rest of the week. There are also collects assigned to a particular holy day (e.g., a feast day of a saint) that are only used on that day. Some feast days, such as the Ascension, have a collect that is used for an eight-day period, or “octave” that follows the feast day. Finally, we have some collects that are assigned to be used for a season, such as the collects for the First Sunday in Advent and Ash Wednesday, which are used for the entire seasons of Advent and Lent, respectively. When in doubt, the rubrics in the Prayer Book are your guide. Remember that liturgics always boils down to a simple principle: “Do the red [i.e., rubrics] and say that black [i.e., the prayers themselves].”

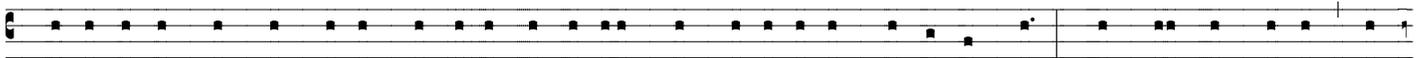
In addition to communicating the focus of the prayer better to the congregation, understanding the collect and its form can help us in sermon preparation, especially with regards to tying together the readings into a coherent whole within the context of the Church year. I have personally found it to be exceedingly edifying to join with countless saints of the Western Church over the ages who have prayed with the Church on her annual journey through Jesus’ life in the Liturgical Calendar. This indeed is one of the reasons we use liturgy as Anglicans: the unity we have with other Christians across time and space through a shared liturgical heritage.



The Collect for the 4th Sunday After Easter

Notated According to the Late Medieval Chant Pattern For Sundays and Feast Days

METRUM



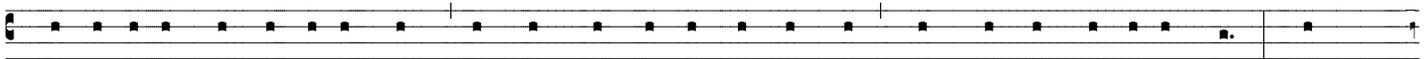
O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sin-ful men; Grant unto thy people, that

FLEX



They may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry

FLEX



and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through

METRUM



Je-sus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

