

THE KEYS



Church of St. Peter the Apostle
Anglican Catholic Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States
www.dmas-acc.org

www.anglican catholic.org

The Rev. Peter Geromel OHI, Th.M, Vicar
December 2020
<https://stpetersacc.org>

The Vicar's Volleyed Verbiage

Outreach in Town & Gown, Part One - Mormonism

A noteworthy thing about the New River Valley are the large numbers of Mormons. Perhaps it has to do with Virginia Tech and continued education. (They seem to care rate learning highly.) Education, incidentally, is key, I think, to bringing them to Gospel truth.

Mormons are devoutly moral and consider themselves good Christians, but, unfortunately, their religion is more like Islam than they'd like to admit, due to the fact that an "angel" presented their prophet, Joseph Smith, with a new Scripture just as Mohammed received. Mormonism spread like wildfire during westward expansion in the 1800s in an atmosphere of contending views of Christianity. Similar theological disagreements were also widespread in Arabia when Islam started. Both Joseph Smith and Mohammed sought to capitalize on disorder and chaos and to bring "unity" among factions.

Fascinatingly, Mormons share some theological emphases with us. For one, a priesthood, "Aaronic" and "Melchizedek," and its succession through history. There are five levels: Elder or Aaronic Priesthood, conferred on males at a certain age; High Priest or Melchizedek Priesthood; Patriarch; one of the Seventy and, finally, one of the Apostles. Within the Aaronic Priesthood there are five levels: Deacon is for 12-year-old baptized males, Teachers for 14-year-old males, Priest for 16 year-old-males, and Bishop for Married adult males - which is equivalent to the Melchizedek or "High Priesthood". In fact, they equate "High Priest" and "Bishop" as we do. We base it on our knowledge of the Church Fathers, especially Clement. I quote, in evidence, from some Scottish Episcopal catechisms in the 19th century:

Q. Was not the Christian Priesthood . . . typified or prefigured by the Jewish?

A. Yes. The Bishop is the Christian High-Priest, and the Presbyters and Deacons answer to the Priests and Levites" (*Bishop Jolly's Catechism, 1829*).¹

Mormons also strongly adhere to the practice of "confirmation" or "laying on of hands," the "Keys," and signings and sealings. This too is something that we hold dear. Again, I quote Scottish Episcopal Bishops:

Q. What is the first qualification necessary for our receiving the Holy Eucharist?

A. A valid Baptism, including Confirmation (*Bishop Innes's Catechism, 1841*)

Q. What is the next thing necessary to qualify us for the Holy Communion?

A. Confirmation by a Bishop of the Catholic Church. (*Bishop Jolly's Catechism, 1829*)

Q. Did the primitive Christians consider Confirmation a part of Baptism?

A. Yes. They considered it as the seal or completion of Baptism; and for that reason it was called the Baptism of the Spirit. (*Bishop Innes's Catechism, 1841*)

Q. How doth the Bishop convey the Holy Spirit?

A. By laying his hands on the persons to be confirmed, and praying that they may receive the Holy Ghost.

Q. Was there no outward or symbol anciently used in Confirmation?

A. Yes. The person confirmed was signed or sealed with the sign of the cross, and anointed with the holy chrism and ointment. (*Bishop Jolly's Catechism, 1829*)²

¹ Justitia, *Peculiarities of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, (Aberdeen: John Avery, 147), 13

² Ibid, 7

Bishop Whipple, the first Episcopal Bishop of Minnesota, summed up our view of this well, “With Catechisms and prayers and holy Scripture, [the Church] trains them for confirmation, for she retains the Apostolic custom of ‘laying on of hands’ as one of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. She then takes their oath of fealty, and blesses them in her Master's name; more teaching and more prayer, and then she calls them to the Lord's table to receive the children's bread . . .”³

Like the Anglo-Catholics, Mormons immigrated west to “evangelize,” and both built beautiful “temples” out on the frontier. They both advanced learning and culture there. (Nashotah House seminary was the first educational institution in Wisconsin). The first Mormon temple in Kirtland, Ohio was founded, incidentally, the same year as the Tractarian or Oxford Movement of Anglo-Catholicism, 1833. Note further, in very, very subtle contrast to our own views, what the Mormons officially say concerning the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.

“In Adam’s day and for a long time afterward, there was one priesthood. We now have two—the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods. Here is the history behind this division in the priesthood.

Adam was given the Melchizedek Priesthood, which was passed along through the prophets and patriarchs of the book of Genesis and eventually to Moses. Then “Moses ... sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; but they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence. ... Therefore, [the Lord] took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy [Melchizedek] Priesthood also; and the lesser [Aaronic] priesthood continued” (D&C 84:23–26).

The higher keys and blessings were taken away from the people, but others remained. During the ministry of the Savior and His Apostles, the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored and its blessings were again seen among the people. But eventually all priesthood authority was lost. Each of the divisions in the priesthood—Aaronic and Melchizedek—was restored separately through Joseph Smith, and we still have both of them today. . . .”⁴

Notice on the other hand how Bishop Whipple, preaching on the frontier where Mormons were making inroads, corrects, either intentionally or inadvertently, their false doctrine.

“In all ages of the world there has been a visible Church. God originated it; He appointed the means of admission to its fellowship; He commissioned its officers; He ordained its mode of access to Himself. Man did not make the Church of God, and man has no authority to change it. In the earlier ages of the world, the head of the family was the Priest, and he had authority to offer the daily sacrifice. It pleased God to unite men into a closer bond of fellowship with Himself and with one another. He ordained the descendants of Abraham to be His covenanted people, and from the days of Moses to the coming of Jesus Christ that church consisted of the Jewish nation and strangers who had been adopted into it, and who had received the rite of circumcision. God appointed for this church a three-fold ministry--a High Priest, Priests, and Levites. He gave to it the law, the rites and ceremonies, and the sacrifices which pointed them to the mediation and atonement by the coming of His only begotten Son. There were many prophets whom God sent who were not of the lineage of Aaron, but to all such He gave the power to prove their commission by Divine miracles. In no case did God leave His people at the mercy of every impostor who claimed to minister in His name.”⁵

It is almost as if Bishop Whipple is speaking directly to Mormonism. And it is on these doctrinal points of contact that we can, I believe, engage them and bring them to the fullness of the Faith that they may well desire.

News and Information

Fr. Geromel has been officially transferred to the DMAS of the ACC from the Diocese of the Holy Cross.

Vestry is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9th, 7:30 pm. There will be a Mass prior to this at 7 pm. **Annual meeting** is Sunday, December 13th. Please return pledge cards, if you have not already.

Christmas Eve services will include at least the traditional Midnight Mass at 11 pm, beginning with Carol singing at 10:30 pm. Special efforts are underway to facilitate safety measures at this our main service.

(A Family Service with no singing is being considered for Christmas Eve at 6 or perhaps 7 pm.)

Christmas Day there will be the 10 am service with shortened Matins and a Mass, and no singing.

³ H.B. Whipple, *Christian Unity*, 1874-75. http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/whipple/christian_unity1875.html

⁴ *Why do we have two priesthoods?* <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/2014/04/why-do-we-have-two-priesthoods?lang=eng>

⁵ H.B. Whipple, *Christian Unity*, 1874-75. http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/whipple/christian_unity1875.html

NOVEMBER, 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
[1] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS TRINITY XXI	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5] 12 noon H.C.	[6]	[7]
[8] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS TRINITY XXII	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12] 12 noon H.C.	[13]	[14]
[15] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS TRINITY XXIII	[16]	[17]	[18] 7:00 p.m. HC 7:30 p.m. Vestry	[19] 12 noon H.C.	[20]	[21]
[22] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT	[23]	[24]	[25]	[26] 12 noon H.C. THANKSGIVING DAY	[27]	[28]
[29] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS ADVENT I	[30]	LEGEND: HC - Holy Communion; FHE – Festal Holy Eucharist; HE - Holy Eucharist; SS – Sunday School; PG - Prayer Group; EP – Evening Prayer; MP – Morning Prayer; P&HU – Prayers and Holy Unction				

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

Please — If you cannot fulfill your assigned duty because of an urgent reason, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SECURE YOUR OWN REPLACEMENT!

Week beginning Sunday →	November 1	November 8	November 15	November 22	November 29
Altar Guild	M. Slayton	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham	M. Slayton	B. Higginbotham
	C. deRosset	J. Butterfield	V. Williams	C. deRosset	J. Butterfield
Coffee Hour	--	--	--	--	--
Ushers	--	--	--	--	--
	--	--	--	--	--
Epistoler	T. Paisley	P. Williams	G. Terrell	C. von Claparede	A. Butterfield
Server	P. Williams	P. Williams	T. Paisley	P. Williams	C. von Claparede
Crucifer	W. Paisley	W. Paisley	C. von Claparede	W. Paisley	W. Paisley

+++

2020 Vestry: Allen Butterfield, Ted Paisley, Phil Pappas, Marnie Slayton, George Terrell, Clemens von Claparede