

A New Direction in a Long Tradition

It is with great excitement that we launch *Open* as an online journal. This initiative marks both the continuation of a long tradition and the beginning of a new direction for our periodical.

For many years, as the topical journal of *Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission*, *Open* has made a significant contribution to the work of liturgical renewal in the North American church. It will continue to do so by publishing articles, book reviews and reports from leading practitioners, scholars and students concerned with the dynamic between sacramental worship and ethical mission, particularly within the Anglican Communion.

As an online journal, *Open* will now be distributed electronically rather than in print. Among its many features, our site will allow readers to search issues – current and past – by subject, keyword, author or article title.

I am confident that you will find this “first” edition includes a number of engaging and timely articles.

In “Making Disciples the Way Jesus Did,” John W.B. Hill, a member of APLM Council and well known author on Christian Initiation and the Catechumenate, offers a stirring reflection on the implications of the work of Rene Girard for baptismal catechesis. Girard’s work develops the notion that human cultures have historically been based on sacrifice as the way out of mimetic, or imitative, violence between rivals. This scapegoating mechanism, argues Girard, is exposed and countered in the Judeo-Christian tradition, particularly by the cross of Christ. Hill’s consideration of the celebration of baptism and the life of discipleship in light of Girard’s anthropology suggests many promising avenues toward further renewal in our liturgical and formational practices.

Todd Townshend is a pastor and scholar very much interested in the deep connection between the preached word, sacramental celebration and mission. His contribution to this issue of *Open*, “On the Road to Everywhere,” explores some of the insights sacramental theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet provides into the vibrant relationship between these Christian practices, particularly as it pertains to liturgical performance and the passage to faith and witness. Chauvet is emerging as one of the most important sacramental theologians in our day, promoting an

existential/phenomenological rather than metaphysical description of the sacraments. Indeed, Chauvet views all theology through the lens of sacramentality. Father Townshend's article offers *Open* readers a valuable introduction to this increasingly influential theologian.

Robert Brooks submits a report on recent work by APLM and others in the Episcopal Church (USA) as they advocate the vision of baptism and the baptismal community voiced by the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. The recovery of baptism's centrality in our understanding and practice is an ongoing task, one that has concrete implications corporately for the church and individually for its members. Canon Brooks outlines some important efforts in this regard leading up to the 2006 General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Finally, the yearly meeting of the APLM Council always endeavors to produce helpful resources for the work of liturgical renewal as it unfolds in parishes and other worshipping communities. One project undertaken at the 2006 meeting hosted by DaySpring Conference Center in Ellenton, Florida, focused on the actions of gathering and sending in the Liturgy, resulting in the document "The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in." With your worshipping communities, you are encouraged to reflect upon the questions it poses. The Council of APLM welcomes any feedback you may have as a result of your reflections. There are plans underway to hold regional events on this topic in the near future. Keep an eye on the APLM website for developments.

In the meantime, I commend to you this issue of *Open*.

In Christ,
D. Jay Koyle, editor.

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