

# *The Shepherd's Staff Newsletter*

*The Right Reverend D. M. Ashman*

*Mid-June 2026*

*Saint Joseph's Seminary*

The **Spring Semester** has concluded except for Latin VI which will continue until the first week in July.

The **Summer Session** will be held on the Zoom Platform from July twentieth to July twenty-fourth.

The schedule for each day will be:

9:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer<sup>1</sup> using COMMON PRAYER ONLINE website; followed by short break

10:15 a.m.: Morning Instruction followed by the Office of Sext (Noon)

A two-hour Lunch Break

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Afternoon Instruction

4:15 p.m.: <sup>1</sup>Evening Prayer (invitations sent by Father Weber)

## *Tentative Subject Outlines*

Monday Morning: The Nature of the Eucharist; the *Straight 28*

Tuesday Morning: The Missal Mass: Low Mass and Missa Cantata

Wednesday Morning: The Solemn High Mass

Thursday Morning: Priest and Deacon at Mass; the Deacon's Liturgy

Friday Morning: Hospital Mass; Requiem Mass; Graveside; Nuptial Mass

Monday Afternoon: Morning and Evening Prayer; the Litany and Penitential Office

Tuesday Afternoon: Baptism, Offices of Instruction and Confirmation

Wednesday Afternoon: Holy Matrimony; Churching of Women; Impediments and Annulments

Thursday Afternoon: Ministry to the Sick, Auricular and General Confession; Burial of the Dead

Friday Afternoon: Holy Orders; Consecration of a Church; Institution of a Minister

<sup>1</sup>Laity (if they wish) are encouraged to attend Morning and Evening Prayer with no tuition charged.

**Fall Semester:** Elementary Latin (starting at unit 13), Advanced Latin (still working every Friday) and Greek (lesson 26) will continue as will *Screwtape Letter 25* (which will morph into *Mere Christianity*) and History and Religion (starting at chapter 40) will begin on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Starting a week earlier on August 19<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Hansen will be offering Dogmatic Theology Based on Dogmatic Theology by Francis Hall via Anglican Dogmatics Vol 1 and 2, Nashotah House.

**16 one-hour lectures live via Zoom and published on YouTube, with notes, reading assignments, discussion.**

- I. **Theology** – The Queen of sciences, nature and supernature, miracles, faith; Approaches and difficulties, sources, Anglicanism, Dogmatic value and necessity, practical application
- II. **Authority** – Truth claims and basis of them, grounds, Creeds, Episcopacy, Tradition, Councils, Biblical Interpretation, Essentials and non-essentials
- III. **God** – Self existence, Apologetics for, Theism of Christianity, Proofs v. Agnostics, The uncaused cause, Teleological argument, moral argument, Ontological, Monotheism, Attributes of God
- IV. **Trinity** – Defined, Catholic doctrine, Revelation sources, Developing doctrine, Biblical sources, difficulties, meaning of Persons in God, Threefold Being, shared and unshared attributes and roles, Father, Son, Spirit

- V. **Creation & Man** – Creation ex nihilo, Father, Son, Spirit's parts in Creation, Free Will and evil, Angels, Man, Religion, Sin, the Fall, Salvation, God's will, the question of predestiny, sanctification
- VI. **Incarnation** – Central truth of Christianity, Anglicanism, Biblical, developed doctrine, Virgin Mary; Christ's Godhead, Christ's humanity, Union of Person, Dual natures; Kenotic Theory, twofold operation, what he knew, Prophet, Priest, King
- VII. **Passion and Exaltation** – Sin, Redemption, Sacrifice, Death of Jesus; Mediator, Harrowing of Hades, Christ's Resurrection; Denials, Features of the cross, 40 days following, Ascension
- VIII. **The Church** – Holy Spirit in OT, NT, Spirit and human souls, Ecclesia, Body of Christ, The Kingdom; Ministry, NT to Post Apostolic, Unity, Holiness, Catholic and Apostolic; Anglicanism, Grace by sacramental system: inward spiritual, outward
- IX. **Sacraments** – Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist in Bible, developed doctrine; Eucharistic implications, benefits, varying theories; Penance, Holy Orders, Holy Matrimony, Unction
- X. **Eschatology** – Developed ideas, Biblical warrant, Death and beyond; of saints, The Day of the Lord, the General Resurrection; and Punishment, the Heavenly Wedding and Eternal Life

Weekly reading, questions and discussion, two mid-course quizzes and final exam.

## *The Blessing of the Font on Pentecost At Saint Joseph's Seminary Chapel*



## Did you Know?

- I. That a bishop never uses his crozier at a funeral or offices for the dead because the crozier is a symbol of jurisdiction and the bishop no longer has jurisdiction over the dead; nor is the crozier used on Good Friday.
- II. That if a church could only afford one set of vestments they should be white because every mass expresses the light, purity and joy of the Resurrection. If a second set can be afforded it should be violet, which could also be used for black.
- III. That there is no obligation to bless a new Paschal Candle every year. If an old one is used it must be long enough to outlast the next season.
- IV. That a Tippet is a black scarf worn by all clergy over their Surplices as choir habit or outdoor services like Burial of the Dead. Deacons do not wear the Tippet in the manner of a Deacon's Stole. Tippetts often have patches from seminaries or dioceses or provinces embroidered on them. Tippetts are not worn under or with Stoles.
- V. That in earlier times, Communion rails were covered with Houseling Cloths which were held by the laity with both hands. (Obviously reception of the sacrament was on the tongue).
- VI. That a Piscina (found in many of our churches) is a small sink (usually in the sacristy) where surplus holy water is disposed of through a pipe leading directly into the earth. If no Piscina is available then holy water is poured reverently into clean earth which will not be trampled on.
- VII. That by ancient custom, when the *Gloria in Excelsis* is said at Mass, the *Te Deum Laudamus* should be said at Morning Prayer.
- VIII. That the Introit at Mass has (a) an Introit Verse or antiphon (usually from the Psalms), (b) a verse of a Psalm, (c) The Glory be..., (d) a repetition of the antiphon. [but note that the Glory be is omitted in Passiontide and at a requiem mass.
- IX. That after Holy Communion the priest (celebrant) takes two ablutions or washing of his fingers. After he consumes the last of the consecrated wine, a server pours a little wine into the chalice which the priest then consumes. Then the priest has his first and second fingers washed with wine and then water over the chalice for the second ablution drinking the same. Ablution comes from the Latin *abluere* meaning to wash away.
- X. That by tradition altar candles must be made of at least fifty-one percent beeswax.
- XI. That Rose (not pink) colored vestments are worn on the third Sunday in Advent and the Fourth Sunday in Lent but not on the weekdays following. If a parish cannot afford Rose Vestments, Violet Vestments may be used.
- XII. That when the Bishop of a diocese celebrates Solemn Mass or a Sung Mass, a seventh candlestick is placed on the altar.
- XIII. That if practicable, a Chalice, Paten and Ciborium must be consecrated by a bishop before being used.
- XIV. That a Corporal is a square linen cloth upon which the Sacred Host is laid and therefore should be made of the finest linen. Corporal comes from the Latin *corpus* meaning body.
- XV. That Deacons belong to the Household of the Bishop. [i.e., they answer to the Bishop]
- XVI. That *Alleluia* is a Hebrew interjection meaning: **Praise to Yahweh**
- XVII. That *Amen* is also a Hebrew interjection meaning: **It is true** or **Let it be so** or **I agree**.
- XVIII. That the three greatest feasts of the Christian year in order of importance are: Easter (Resurrection), Pentecost or Whitsunday (Coming of the Holy Ghost) and Epiphany (the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles and the beginning of his earthly ministry).
- XIX. That Whitsunday is called the Sunday in White because of the white robes worn by the newly baptized on Pentecost; and reference to the Holy Ghost bringing grace to all Christians.
- XX. That a priest acting as Deacon of the Mass wears his stole as a deacon not as a priest.

## *From Christ the King Parish in Washington DC*

Father Carleton Clarke, Vicar of the Parish of Christ the King, reported a joyous day on the First Sunday after Trinity why the parish celebrated the birthday of longtime member Dr. Arlene Maclin and the twenty fourth anniversary of Father Dr Daniel McGrath's ordination to the sacred order of priests. A special visitor was the Right Reverend Ben Jones, Coadjutor Bishop of the Atlantic States. Father expressed special thanks to the musicians especially their regular organist Ms. Charlotte von Claparede-Crola, guest organist Dr. Josephine McGrath, cantor Mr. Daniel Boehmer, and soloist Mr. Alutu Uzo. Their music added beauty, dignity, and inspiration to our celebration and lifted all hearts heavenward.





*Bishop Mitchell Confirms at St. Thomas on Trinity One*  
*June 7, 2026*



## *A Sermon for the Second Sunday after Trinity*

*I say unto you that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.*

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen

RC Sproul Junior, son of the late Presbyterian theologian and a respected preacher in his own right, offers his personal theory of Biblical interpretation, to which I wholeheartedly subscribe: Whenever I encounter someone in a Bible text doing something stupid, I say “that’s me.” And whenever I encounter a Biblical character doing something bad or evil, again, “that’s me.” The point is that this book is not just a book of stories, poems, and history.

This book is about me. And you. And we are evil and sinful creatures by nature, at least since our father Adam fell from grace for seeking to be like God. This book makes the point over and over and over that I’m not God. Not even close. I am made in His image and that’s as close as I get most of the time. One of my frequent sins is that I get irritated when people don’t do what they’re supposed to do. And those of you who took intro to psych in college know that’s very likely because I see myself in them.

A few years ago I arranged a dinner for a clergyman who was visiting a church I was attending. I had commitments from two other couples, both of whom begged off at the last minute. Alysa and I enjoyed our evening with this fellow in spite of my irritation with them. The irony is that I had just been studying today’s Gospel reading, the parable of the great feast. In the first century it was common to issue a pre-invitation—today we call it a “save the date—” You let your guests know what day the party is going to be. Time and details to follow. And then when dinner’s actually happening, you sent a servant out, if you were wealthy enough to have one, to tell the guests. Come; for all things are now ready. And in the case of this parable everyone who was invited declines the invitation. Three particularly flimsy excuses are cited as examples:

One man had bought some real estate and had to go see it. Really? Who buys real estate without looking at it? Now the first time I preached on this passage I pointed out that it was a very strange time in the real estate market. People were buying real estate without looking at it. Alysa and I were trying to buy a house and it seemed like we couldn’t get an offer in before whatever we were looking at was off the market. But that was and is not a common scenario. Same song, second verse, with the next guy who has bought a yoke of oxen he doesn’t know anything about. Oxen were the steam engines and electric motors of the first century. It would have been ridiculous to buy this kind of expensive livestock without knowing whether it could do the job.

I know for a fact we have at least one cattle rancher in this church and I’m willing to bet he’s never bought a cow or a bull without doing some research on it. The final example cites a man who begs off because he just got married. Now I know newlyweds have certain priorities, but you’ve got to eat. And where better than at a fancy dinner party with your new wife on your arm? Do I see myself in these examples? You bet. Do you see yourself in these examples? How many times have we made flimsy excuses because we didn’t want to be bothered with a social activity?

And here’s the question behind the question: How often do we make flimsy excuses when Our Lord or His Church has an invitation for us? We are invited to a great banquet in the Holy Communion every Sunday. Our tradition recommends we read the daily office daily, that we make a confession twice a year in Advent and Lent, that we practice fasting and abstinence in those penitential seasons. These are not punishments or restrictions, these are opportunities for spiritual growth.

I read the same Bible passages every year on the Second Sunday after Trinity at Morning and Evening Prayer and I learn something new every time. This is the third sermon I've preached on today's readings and every one of them is different. And yet we're often like that guy with the new wife. I'd rather skip Morning Prayer today, or skip Church this Sunday, and stay home and attend to things I'd rather be doing than attend to those things I know are good for me.

Our Lord told this story at a dinner party in the home of a wealthy religious leader. Jesus had been invited to dinner after he had healed a man on the Sabbath—breaking Jewish law. This is about keeping your friends close but your enemies closer. The religious leaders are beginning to realize that this upstart Galilean is the enemy of their whole existence and identity. The 14th chapter of Luke begins: It came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

John Trapp, 17th century English theologian, wrote “They watched as intently as a dog doth for a bone.” They were watching for Him to say or do something they could use to accuse Him. And before they know it, He is accusing them. He's accusing them of refusing His invitation. They are the chosen people. Jews were invited to the feast long before any of us, and they knew it. And now He's telling them that the Lord's Servant is right in front of them telling them to come on in, the feast is ready, and they've got better things to do—they think they have better things to do.

Jesus, as He does in these meetings, treads right up to the edge of heresy, but stops short. He makes his pointed point but does not permit an opportunity to accuse and arrest Him—at least not yet. And then, thank God, He issues an invitation to the lowest of first century Jewish society—the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind.

And there's still room at His table. And so he invites us, the Gentiles. Those out there on the highways and hedges who were not even allowed into the city.

And we confirm all of this in the subtle turn of “grammatical person.” What do I mean by that? Well consider that Jesus is telling most of this story in the third person: “a certain man, he, his, him.” Until the person changes in the final sentence:

For I say unto you that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. My supper. This isn't part of the story. This is Jesus telling His hosts those who won't hear the invitation are uninvited. There's a new roster of dinner guests and they aren't on it. We are. But as I review Pastor Sproul's theory, as I look for the stupid in the text, I have to look for me. Now that I'm on the Master's guest list—now that you're on the list too—are we trying to accept the invitation? Or are we continuing to make flimsy excuses?

We accepted the invitation when we were baptized, we accepted the invitation to come today and participate in the Lord's Supper. But His is an invitation that must be re-accepted daily. There's always another piece of ground, another ox to buy, another family obligation to attend to. God grant that we should recognize His invitation, put aside our earthly concerns, and to follow what He would have us do—today, tomorrow, and for the rest of our earthly lives.

Father Charles Newcomb