

THE EPISTLE

Saint James' Episcopal Church
Livingston, Alabama

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March 2016

This Month's Cover

Our cover this month is *The Resurrection of Christ with Saints Leonardo de Noblac and Lucia di Syracusa* by Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio and Marco d'Oggiono. It is oil on poplar wood, painted in 1491, and measuring 92"x73". It is unusual for two main reasons: instead of portraying either angels or the astounded Roman guards by the tomb, it portrays two early Christian martyrs, St. Leonardo de Noblac (d. 559) and St. Lucia di Syracusa (283-304). St. Leonard is the patron saint of released prisoners (note the iron shackles in the foreground), which is an appropriate symbol for the release of Christ from the prison of death; he is venerated on November 6. St. Lucy is the patron saint of the blind and of schoolgirls, and is venerated on December 13. She was extremely popular in 15th century Italy, which is probably why she was included in the painting. She was blinded before being martyred, so she is traditionally portrayed holding a dish with her eyes on it.

Another reason that the painting is unusual is that it was done in the studio of Leonardo da Vinci by two of his students. It was a training project, yet is considered one of the masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance. Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio (1466?-1516) was one of Leonardo's best students. He and another top student, Bernardino Luini, went on to achieve great fame as High Renaissance artists. The other painter of this piece, Marco d'Oggiono (1470?-1549?), was considered mediocre by the high standards of his time. His paintings lacked vivacity, and his drawings were rather banal. He achieved a modicum of fame, however, for his excellent copies of Leonardo da Vinci's works. In an era without photography, good copyists were in great demand. Although there are no records to confirm it, it is likely that Boltraffio painted the figures in our painting and d'Oggiono painted the background. It was common at the time for a master to paint the main parts of a picture and then have his students paint the background and often the clothing.

Richard R. Losch+

A Word From the Editor

As Christians we believe that we follow the one true Faith, as revealed through the Church that was established by God through the Incarnation of his Son. If this is so, then all other religions are either completely false or at least in grave error. When stated as simply as that, this sounds like a very closed-minded idea and is hideously politically incorrect, and I am sure that many will consider it such. Think about it for a minute, however. If all religions were equal, then it would not matter which one you follow, and it probably would not matter much if you followed none at all. There are many people, unfortunately, who are quite comfortable with that idea, and they are free to be so. However, having said that I believe Christianity to be the one true Faith, I hasten to add some serious qualifications to that statement.

The Church, in its belief that it has the one true Faith, has often been arrogant enough to be led to the very unchristian corollary that it therefore has the right to force itself on others against their will. Jesus Christ, though he had the power to call down an army of angels, never forced his will on others, even to the point of going to the cross. The early Church surged through the hostile Roman Empire without ever raising a sword against it, and eventually it became the official religion of the Empire. It did so by teaching and by persuading people through example. It was not until centuries later that it forgot Christ's teaching and instigated such atrocities as the baptism of the entire city of Kiev at sword-point, then naming as a saint the man who did it, Vladimir the Baptizer.

The Jews call themselves God's Chosen People, and that they are. But as any Jew who understands his faith will tell

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you, being chosen does not mean being favorites. It means being chosen to bring the knowledge of God to the rest of the world. That is an awesome responsibility, not a source of extra privilege and ease of life. Having a land of milk and honey means milking a lot of cows and enduring a lot of bee stings. Similarly, the Church, as the New Jerusalem, has picked up the baton and now bears the responsibility of letting the world know of its salvation. That means showing the world the love of Christ, not forcibly dragging the world to his feet.

The worst thing we can do if we believe that we have the true Faith is to proclaim to the rest of the world that they are wrong. Rather, we have to show them what we have in such a way that they will want it. That can be done only through gentleness and love, and never by force. We have something wonderful, and if we are true to the love that we claim to have, we should want to share it with others. It saddens us that there will be those who reject it, but we have to respect their right to do so. We need not submit to their attempts to suppress it, but we must respect their right to reject it.

I said that the worst thing we can do is to tell the non-believers that they are wrong, but it is just as bad to treat them as if they are right. False ecumenism, which is what the Church of Nice practices, is saying that all religions are equal. If this were true, then God is cruel indeed to have sent his Son to die on the cross, and to have allowed countless Christian martyrs to have suffered and died in his name. What need is there for Christ if we can be saved just as well by any other religion? Remember Jesus' teaching, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn. 14:6). "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This is what we must preach to the rest of the world. Saint Francis allegedly said, "Preach the Gospel daily—and if necessary, use words."



Special Services for Holy Week and Easter

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday - On Sunday, March 20th, our observance of Holy Week will begin with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Communion at St. James' at 11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday – St. James' will observe this day with the traditional Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Good Friday – St. James' will observe this day with the Liturgy for Good Friday and the Mass of the Presactified beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday – The Community Sunrise Service will be hosted by St. James' at 6:30 a.m. at the Livingston Civic Center. St. James will celebrate The Day of the Resurrection with Holy Communion beginning at 11:00 a.m.

Hiram Patrenos

Holy Week Services at Neighboring Livingston Churches

Livingston First Presbyterian Church:

Maundy Thursday – special service beginning at 7:15 p.m.

Good Friday – the church will be open from 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for anyone wishing to pray or meditate.

Livingston United Methodist Church:

Monday - Friday of Holy Week - noonday services featuring devotionals by area ministers with lunch following in the Fellowship Hall.

Good Friday – Tenebrae Service beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Hiram Patrenos

“I've learned that the easiest way to grow as a person is to surround myself with people who are smarter than I am.”

Andy Rooney

Lenten Organ Concert

The Livingston First Presbyterian Church invites everyone to a Lenten Organ Concert on Tuesday, March 8th beginning at noon. Dr. Heekyung Lee will offer various selections for approximately 30 minutes and there will be a soup luncheon following in the Fellowship Hall. Contributions will be accepted for the John Brown Memorial Scholarship, which funds scholarships for students participating in their choir.

Hiram Patrenos

Easter Flowers

Each year St. James' Church offers the opportunity to remember loved ones through donations to the Altar Guild, which provides the lilies and altar flowers in the Church for Easter services. If you wish to make a donation for this—In Memory of, In honor of, or In Thanksgiving for—envelopes with forms are available at the back of the Church or you may print this information clearly and mail it along with your contribution to Carolyn Patrenos, P.O. Box 399, Livingston, AL 35470. Checks should be made payable to St. James' Altar Guild. Because of the increased costs for these flowers, we ask for a minimum donation of \$25.00 for memorials. Publication deadline for inclusion in the Easter bulletin is Wednesday, March 23rd. Your donation is tax deductible.

Hiram Patrenos

Why Was Jesus Late?

Jesus knew that his friend Lazarus was sick, yet he waited until he had been dead four days before he went to Lazarus' home in Bethany. In those days most Jews believed that the soul remained hovering about the body for three days after death in an effort to return to it. By waiting four days, Jesus emphasized that Lazarus was being raised from the truly dead, and was not simply being resuscitated.

Richard R. Losch+

Be Wordly Wise

Welcome

In an amazing number of languages the words for welcome have the same meaning and are constructed in the same way, using their words for *well-* and the appropriate roots for come. In German, welcome is *Willkommen*, come well. In several other languages it has exactly the same meaning: Italian, *benvenuto*; French, *bienvenue*; Dutch, *welkom*; Portuguese, *boa vinda*. In many languages, of course, the expression is based on a totally different concept. One of my favorites is Chipewyan (the language of the Ojibwa Indians). Their word for welcome is *ho'a*, which means “there's room.”

Richard R. Losch+

A Touch of Trivia

General Zhuge Liang (181-234 AD) is considered the greatest general in Chinese history, along with being one of China's finest statesmen and diplomats.¹ One time he had to defend a city against an army of 150,000 men. He had only 100 men. He ordered them to hide, opened the gates, and sat on the city wall playing a lute. The enemy general, convinced that it was a trap, ordered a retreat.

Richard R. Losch+

Ancient Scurvy

When we think of scurvy we usually think of 18th century sailors, but it is actually a very ancient disease caused by a lack of dietary vitamin C (ascorbic acid). Its medical name is *scorbutus*, thus the name ascorbic (anti-scorbutic) acid. The oldest case of scurvy every found was recently discovered in an infant's skeleton in Egypt. It dates back to about 4000 BC, well before the peak of ancient Egyptian civilization.

Richard R. Losch+

¹ He is not the author of the classic *The Art of War*, which was written 700 years earlier by the military strategist Sun Tzu.

Sundown or Midnight?

For centuries Christians have argued as to whether feasts begin at sundown or at midnight. For thousands of years it has been the Jewish tradition that a Sabbath¹ begins when three stars are visible, and ends when one can no longer see three stars. Cloudy evenings were no problem, because centuries of experience had made it pretty clear when the proper time arrived even if the stars were not actually visible. The Muslim Ramadan fast runs from sunup to sundown. With them the determining factor is that the fast begins at dawn when one can distinguish a black thread from a white one, and ends at dusk when that distinction can no longer be made.

At the dawn of civilization in ancient Mesopotamia the Sumerians divided the day into 24 hours,² with the cycle beginning at sunrise. These hours were not of fixed length, but varied with the time of year. A day hour was 1/12 the time from sunrise to sunset, and a night hour the equivalent. When we read in the Bible that Jesus was crucified at the sixth hour, that meant six hours after sunrise, which would have been noon. Fixed-length hours and the concept of noon and midnight as milestones in the day did not come about until well into the Middle Ages, along with the invention of the mechanical clock. Until then time was not measured by fixed hours of the day, but rather by the passage of time relative to sunrise. Even after the development of fixed-length hours, such devices as sundials, marked candles, water-clocks and hourglasses measured only the passage of minutes and hours, not specific times such as 9:15 a.m. or 1:25 p.m. With the invention of the mechanical 12-hour clock, they set the point

¹ For the Jews, a Sabbath is any holy day or feast, not just the Day of Rest on the seventh day (Saturday). Although every Saturday is a Sabbath, many Sabbaths fall on other days of the week. Christians often call Sunday the Sabbath because it is the day of the Resurrection.

² It was actually two 12-hour cycles, because 12 was a sacred number for reasons more complicated than we can go into here. It was this same system that gave us the 60 (12x5) minute hour and the 360° circle.

when the sun was at its highest point in the sky as 12:00, and worked the two 12-hour cycles from that. The highest point of the sun is called its meridian, so to this day we measure time using a.m. and p.m., meaning *ante meridiem* and *post meridiem*, Latin for before and after the meridian. “Solar time,” time based on the actual position of the sun, was in use worldwide until the mid-19th century. Each town had someone (often the local watch repairman) who was responsible for “shooting the sun” with a sextant each morning and setting an official clock on which everyone else based their time. Eventually railroads made travel so fast that their timetables made it necessary to have a standard time that all towns observed. Standard time zones were drawn up based on the time at England’s Greenwich Observatory (“Greenwich Mean Time” GMT). By the end of the 19th century these artificial times were observed all over the world.¹

To return to the question of when feasts start, there is no fixed answer to that among Christians in the West. In the Eastern Orthodox Churches the tradition is uniformly the same as that of the Jews, beginning feasts at sundown. In the West, the general tradition among Protestants is to begin them at midnight, while Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans vary. For example, the traditional Christmas Midnight Mass, which is a relatively modern custom, was usually celebrated at midnight, which many considered the beginning of Christmas Day. It had its roots, however, in a much earlier observance, the Easter Vigil. This service begins by marking the official end of Lent with a beautiful penitential and prophetic liturgy, and then ends with the first Mass of Easter. It traditionally begins at sundown on Easter Eve. About the time of the Protestant Reformation many Protestants, especially the Calvinists, did not observe Christmas and Easter because they thought them to be pagan. Anglicans and Lutherans reacted to this not only by continuing to observe the Easter Vig-

¹ In 1972 Greenwich Mean Time was replaced by Coordinated Universal Time (CUT), which is maintained by a battery of atomic clocks.

il, but also by replicating it in the Christmas Vigil. As Protestants began more and more to observe Christmas and Easter they began to pick this up, but tended to move it to being a midnight celebration instead of a sundown one. After World War II many churches began moving their midnight Christmas Eve service up to earlier hours. This did not bother many, because by that time most of the Protestant churches celebrated Christmas all through Advent anyway rather than waiting for Christmas Eve. Anglicans justified an 11:00 p.m. service on the grounds that the consecration of the Sacrament would not take place until after midnight, and for those who believed that the feast begins at sundown it was no problem anyhow (Anglicans can be masters of rationalization).

Today in all secular legal matters a new day is considered to begin at midnight. For example, if your 21st birthday falls on April 10, you may not legally have a drink at 11:59 p.m. on April 9, because you are only 20. One minute later, however, you are 21 and can legally drink. Ecclesiastical matters are a bit more flexible, and as our culture becomes increasingly secular the churches tend more and more to go back to the early tradition of starting the liturgical day at sundown. This is easier to do than ever before, because now instead of looking at stars or threads we can simply click on our smartphones to find when sunset officially occurs (and then hope we don't forget to turn them off before the service begins).

Richard R. Losch+

A Touch of Trivia

Orpah was Naomi's daughter-in-law and Ruth's sister-in-law (Ruth 1:4). Oprah Winfrey's birth name as it appears on her birth certificate was Orpah. So many people mispronounced it as Oprah, however, that she finally accepted that pronunciation and has used Oprah ever since.

Richard R. Losch+

The best new word of 2015: Smombie. A smombie is someone who stares at his smartphone like a zombie, totally disregarding his surroundings.

Catholic, Protestant and Protestant

No, the headline is not a typo. Despite the fact that these words are often used with the implication that they are clearly defined, in fact they have very broad meanings. There are three main branches of the Catholic Church and two large branches of Protestants (with, sad to say, almost 40,000 divisions in them). To add to the confusion, there is much overlapping in all of these. The Christian Church, the body of all who are baptized in Christ, has failed miserably in its fidelity to Jesus' prayer "that they all may be one" (John 17:21).

First let us consider the words themselves. The word catholic means universal, in the sense of all-embracing. It derives from the Greek *katholikos* (καθολικός), universal, which in turn derives from *kata holos* (κατά ‘ολος), meaning according to the whole. The Catholic Faith, then, is the faith which is all-embracing. It is for all mankind, for all places, and for all time. In the early days of the Church there developed a divergence between the interpretation of the Faith in the East and in the West, resulting in the Great Schism of 1054. This produced the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Each of these claims to proclaim the One True Faith as deposited by the Holy Spirit with the Apostles. Although their liturgical practices differ, there are only a very few (but very important) differences in their theology.

The word protestant is a bit more complex, as it has two very different origins. When Martin Luther challenged the Roman Catholic Church he called himself *Protestis Fidei*, Witness for the Faith. This derives from the Latin *pro*, for or in favor of, and *testis*, witness.¹ He used the term in a positive sense, meaning that he stood in defense of the Faith. His early followers also referred to themselves as *Protestes*, Witnesses.

As the Reformation exploded across Europe, many re-

¹ In the ancient Roman courts only a whole adult male could testify as a witness. He was physically examined to be sure he qualified, and thus to this day the male genital gland is called a testis, "witness," or testicle, "little witness."

formers saw themselves as protesting against the Roman Church, and called themselves *Protestanti*, Protesters. This is a negative term, meaning those in protest. It derives from the Latin *protestare*, to protest (its past participle is *protestantus*). Most Europeans at the time were ill-educated, and did not see the distinction between the positive *protestis* and the negative *protestantus*. As a result, and because Luther did in time stand in protest against the Roman Church, the term Protestant became the common term for all who were involved in any aspect of the Reformation. To this day the term Protestant Reformation is common, although the Reformation was not all Protestant. It was made up of several disparate movements, including the Anglican Reformation (which was not part of the continental Protestant Reformation), the Reform Movement (the Calvinist Reformation), and the Anabaptists (the spiritual ancestors of the Baptists and Mennonites). The Anabaptists considered themselves a branch of the Church that goes back to John the Baptist, and deny being a part of the so-called Protestant Reformation.¹

While the roots of the Anglican Reformation are embedded in the reign of Henry VIII, the Anglican Church did not become separated from the Roman Catholic Church until a half century later during the reign of Elizabeth I, who established the Church of England.² The Church of England

¹ Baptists and Mennonites who understand their history do not like being called Protestants, because it implies that they grew out of the Reformation, while they claim to have preceded it by 1400 years. In the English Civil War the Baptists fought alongside the Protestants against King Charles I (an Anglican), and as a result the two became lumped together in the minds of many. When Charles was murdered the Baptists were offered very little participation in the new Protestant government.

² It is a myth that Henry VIII founded the Church of England in order to get a divorce. His tyrannical attempts to get an annulment from Katherine of Aragon stirred up the revolt that eventually became the Anglican Reformation, but Henry died in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, despite the fact that the Church was far from happy with him.

sought to retain the traditional Catholic Faith, while enriching it with the best of the Protestant ideas that were not in conflict with the ancient Faith.¹ One of its major challenges to the ancient Faith was the rejection of the supremacy of the Pope, recognizing him as the principal bishop, but not as supreme. The principal Anglican bishop is the Archbishop of Canterbury.² As the British Empire spread around the world it planted Anglicanism on every continent, with each national Church being autonomous.

The branch of the Anglican Church in the United States is the Episcopal Church. It separated from the Church of England and became an independent autonomous Anglican body in 1789, the same year the United States adopted the Constitution. After the Revolution the Americans prayed for the President instead of the King of England, so the English bishops refused to consecrate an American bishop (Samuel Seabury). As a result the American Church turned to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, who agreed only on the condition that we base our Book of Common Prayer on theirs. The Episcopal Church in Scotland³ was strongly influenced by Protestantism, so when the American Church was organized it took the name The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (PECUSA). In the 19th century objection to the use of the term Protestant arose, and it

¹ The Church of England is the mother Church of all the Anglican Churches around the world, including the Episcopal Church. Most of these are in communion with the Church of England, although there are several Anglican bodies that are not.

² The Archbishop of Canterbury is not an Anglican Pope. He is nothing more than the titular head of the Anglican Communion, symbolizing the unity of Anglicans in a common theology and liturgy. Although his influence is great around the Anglican world, the only place he has any defined authority is in the Archdiocese of Canterbury in England.

³ Unlike in England, the established Church of Scotland is the Presbyterian Church. The Episcopal Church of Scotland is allowed, but the Scottish government does not support it.

reached a peak in the 1950s. In 1964 the General Convention allowed the option either to use it or drop it (for legal reasons it could not be altogether dropped immediately). In 1979 the name was officially simplified to The Episcopal Church (TEC). The reason for the controversy was twofold—many argued that since the Anglican Church is a Catholic Church with some Protestant overtones, the word is inappropriate. It was also argued that since the word carries negative implications and the Episcopal Church stands as *Protestis Fidei* and not in protest against Rome, it should not be used.

We mentioned above that to add to the confusion in the words there is some overlapping in the various branches of the Church. The distinction between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism is not clean-cut. When the Great Schism took place in 1054, many Eastern Churches chose to affiliate with Rome rather than with Constantinople, yet they did not want to abandon their traditional Eastern liturgy. They were accepted into the Roman fold as what are called Uniate Churches. They are Roman Catholic in their theology and allegiance to the Papacy, yet their liturgy is in the Eastern tradition and their priests are allowed to be married under the same restrictions that are observed in the Eastern Church.¹ Since 1054 several more Orthodox Churches have affiliated with the Uniates. In recent years the Roman Church has established a similar opportunity for Anglicans, called the Ordinariate, in which Anglican priests, parishes and presumably even whole dioceses can do the same. With a few minor changes the Anglican liturgy is retained, and priests may be married.²

¹ In the Eastern Church a married man may be ordained a priest (but can never be consecrated a bishop), but once ordained he may never marry or remarry, even if he becomes widowed.

² As with the Uniates, priests may not marry after entering the Ordinariate, but those who are already married may remain so and still function as priests. The main exception is that those who are remarried after divorce or are married to a divorcée may not function as priests.

Another situation of overlapping is found among many branches of the Lutheran Church. The Church of Sweden, which is Lutheran, considers itself in every respect a Catholic Church in the same way as do the Anglicans, and it is in full communion with the Anglican Church. Several other branches of the Lutheran Church accept many of Luther's teachings, but do not accept his rejection of the traditional Catholic Faith and consider themselves Catholic.¹ Some of these are in communion with Anglicanism, and some are independent. In 1870 a group of German Roman Catholic dioceses renounced their allegiance to the Papacy and formed the Union of Utrecht of Old Catholic Churches. They are commonly called Old Catholics. Other than their renunciation of the Papacy they have retained most of the Roman Catholic theology and liturgy. In 1925 they recognized the validity of the Anglican priesthood, and in 1932 they entered into full communion with the Church of England.

While the term Protestant is often sweepingly applied to any non-Roman or non-Orthodox Christian Church, it is not at all appropriate to do so. While all of these have been influenced to one degree or another by the thought that rose out of the Reformation (as indeed has the post-Reformation and especially the post-Vatican II Roman Church), many, including the Anglicans, retain the Catholic Faith and embrace their Catholic heritage. They do not stand in protest against the Roman Church, but rather stand as *Protestes Fidei*, Witnesses to the Faith, hand-in-hand with their sister Churches of Rome and the East. On the other hand there are those who stand in firm opposition to Rome and the East. These proudly bear the name Protestant, affirming their protest against many of the ancient Catholic and Orthodox practices and beliefs.

Richard R. Losch+

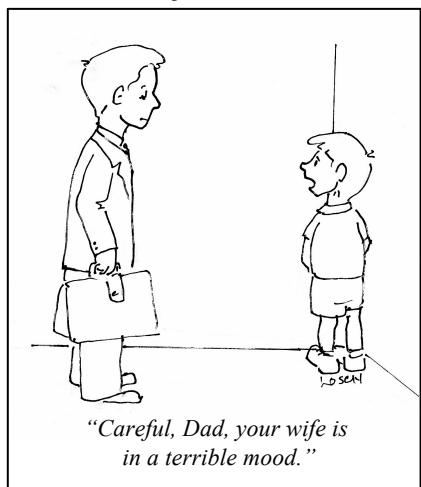
¹ There are also some branches of Lutheranism that clearly proclaim themselves to be Protestant.

A Touch of Trivia

The Canary Islands are not named after the bird; the bird, which flourishes there, is named after the islands. The Latin *canarius* means relating to a dog. The islands' original discoverers named them *Insulae Canariae*, Dog Islands, because of the large number of wild dogs that roamed there.

Richard R. Losch+

JAMIE by Richard R. Losch



"Careful, Dad, your wife is
in a terrible mood."



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