

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 49.
December 03, 2023
Advent 1

“Lay” Ministries

The way some people – maybe most – talk, you’d think that the distinction between the ordained Clergy and the laity in the Church is a stark one: they are two different worlds that intersect mainly on Sundays. In this scenario, it is the clergy who do the ministering, the laity are ministered to. In fact, minister is almost synonymous these days with clergyman.

In fact though, the line between the two has always been a rather fuzzy one. In pre-reformation times (and up to the Second Vatican Council, in the Roman Catholic Church) there existed what we call ‘minor orders’ – all of which underwent some sort of ordination though by and large the individuals continued to function as lay persons in their daily lives. These included 3 ministries that are familiar to us all in the Anglican tradition: porter (usher); lector (reader), exorcist, and acolyte.

Obviously we still have ushers and readers, and acolytes, but we don’t think of those who do these jobs as ‘ministers,’ though that is exactly what they are.

In our present set up in the Episcopal Church of the Philippines, we can divide these ministries into two groups – the first, which require licensing by the bishop, the second which does not.

The licensed ministries here at Holy Trinity are: the Eucharistic Minister who helps the Priest administer the Sacrament: the Eucharistic Visitor, who is allowed to take the Sacrament to those who are in hospital or otherwise unable to attend the Sunday service, and the Lay Readers, who read Scripture at the Eucharist. The Church Canons also provide for Lay Preachers, Evangelists and Catechist which we don’t have at the present time at CHT – but may introduce eventually.

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The remaining ministries are manifold: acolytes or servers who assist at the Eucharist, ushers and greeters, Sunday School teachers, vestry members, and the list could go on. All are essential to the spiritual life of a healthy parish.

And we need more of all these ministers, from Eucharistic Ministers/Visitors to acolytes to vestry members and ushers – all of them.

So I urge any of you who feel called to participate in any of these ministries – especially those who are newer to the congregation – to approach either Fr. Bert or myself, and see where it leads. I hope to have a pamphlet out by next weekend that presents in more detail the responsibilities of each ministry to help steer you towards the one that allows you to exercise your particular gifts (and we all are gifted in one way or another) and strengthen your relationship with God.

SAINTS OF THE WEEK:

Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, Founder of the Little Gidding Community, *4 December*. Born in London in 1592, Nicholas Ferrar was educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge and elected a Fellow there in 1610. From 1613, he travelled extensively on the continent for five years, trying his hand as a businessman and then as a parliamentarian on his return. In 1625, he moved to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, then a derelict manor-house with a chapel which was being used as a hay barn. He was joined by his brother and sister and their families and by his mother, and they established together a community life of prayer, using *The Book of Common Prayer*, and a life of charitable works in the locality. He was ordained to the diaconate by William Laud the year after they arrived. He wrote to his niece in 1631, "I purpose and hope by God's grace to be to you not as a master but as a partner and fellow student." This indicates the depth and feeling of the community life Nicholas and his family strove to maintain. After the death of Nicholas on this day in 1637, the community was broken up in 1646 by the Puritans, who were suspicious of it and referred to it as the Arminian Nunnery. They feared it promoting the return of Romish practices into England, and so all Nicholas's manuscripts were burned.

The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

8 December. This festival in honour of the conception of the mother of our Lord is celebrated on this day in both the eastern and the western Church. This feast, which dates from the seventh century, acknowledges the preparation by God of his people to receive their Saviour and Lord, putting 'heaven in ordinary' and showing that mortal flesh can indeed bring Christ to the world.



TODAY: Wedding, 2:30 pm.

COMING UP:

- Dec.4-16, THEA Inventory Sale
- December 7, Wedding, 3:00 pm.
- December 10, Norway Advent Service, 6:00 pm
- December 17, Rose Sunday. JOINT Service 8:30 am.
- December 17, Sunday School Christmas Pageant; Christmas Concert, 9:45 am. Potluck lunch follows. *[SIGN-UP ON THE BOARD]*
- December 24, Regular morning service.
- December 24, Midnight mass, 10:00 p.m.
- December 25, Christmas morning service, 10:00 a.m.
- December 31, Regular morning service.
- January 1, Feast of the Holy Name, 10:00 a.m.

Our responsibility in this generation is to aim at fellowship as the chief business of life - fellowship with God and fellowship in God with one another. *[Charles Henry Brent]*