

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 51.
December 17, 2023
Advent 3

Supporting the Church Church Governance.

The Episcopal Church, like the early Church, depends on lay participation in the governance of the Church – it is in this regard a democratic Church. Every parish is governed by its Vestry, which is elected by the all parish members at the Annual General Assembly (AGM); the AGM in turn, elects four lay delegates to represent us at the annual Diocesan Convention of our diocese, the Episcopal Diocese of Central Philippines. The Convention, in its turn, elects lay and clergy representatives to the Synod, the highest organ of governance for the Province of the Philippines; the Synod is held every three years. All dioceses of the Province send delegates to Synod. Finally every 10 years, all the bishops of the Province join all the bishops of the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference, presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The thing is, that none of this works properly without YOUR participation! Being a delegate to any of these bodies is a great way to serve the Church and its mission; in other words, it's a way of serving Christ.

Now, it's going to be a very exciting and important year in the life of this parish, this diocese, and of the whole Province of the Philippines. This year, as things now stand, two Vestry members must step down as they have reached the end of their four year term, and three more, having served two years, are up for reelection, and we must choose our delegates to the Convention where we will be electing a new Bishop and our delegates to Synod who will be electing the new Prime Bishop!

So I urge those of you who have any interest in the running of this parish, this diocese, and this Province of our Anglican Communion, to be here for our AGM, scheduled for January 28th 2024 after the 9:30 service and make your voices heard. Last year we had very few attend the meeting – not a healthy sign! Let's have a better turnout this year, because the future of the parish, the diocese and the Province, depends on you taking your role seriously.

HTC Ministry of the Sick.

Heal the sick! " (Mt 10:8). The Church has received this charge from the Lord and tries to carry it out as much through the care she gives to the sick as through the intercessory prayer with which she accompanies them. She believes in the life-giving presence of Christ, doctor of souls and bodies. This presence is particularly active through the sacraments, and in a very special way through the Eucharist, the bread which gives eternal life (Jn 6, 54. 58) and of which Saint Paul insinuates the link with bodily health (1 Cor 11:30).

The Apostolic Church very quickly adopted the rite of the sick attested by Saint James: ***"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call the presbyters of the Church and let them pray over him, after having laid the hands on and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the patient, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him"*** (James 5:14-15). This Tradition has been perpetuated in the Church through the centuries and provides a particular gift of the Holy Spirit to all those who suffer.

The primary grace of this sacramental rite is a grace of comfort, peace, and courage to overcome the difficulties specific to illness or the fragility of old age. This grace is a gift of the Holy Spirit which renews trust and faith in God and strengthens against the temptations of the evil one: temptation to discouragement and the anguish of death (Heb 2:15). This assistance of the Lord by the power of his Spirit wants to lead the sick to the healing of the soul, of the spirit, but also to that of the body, if such is the will of God.

Holy Trinity Church would like to pay particular attention to this mission that Christ entrusted to his apostles, by restoring in its pastoral program as in the past, a monthly healing mass open to all starting January 2024, this every third Thursday of the month. She would also like to redouble her efforts in visiting the sick at home or in hospitals and bring them Holy Communion. We highly encourage all parishioners to help their sick to participate in this monthly healing mass. Please also inform the parish office for those sick people who would like to have home visits and receive Holy communion.

With Blessings, Fr. Bert

COMING UP:

- 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.

SAINTS:

St. Thomas the Apostle, 21 December. Thomas is mentioned among the number of the Apostles in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke but it is in John's gospel that his significance is revealed. Firstly, he is heard encouraging the other disciples to go to Judæa with Jesus; then, not knowing what Jesus meant when he talked about where he was to go elicited the answer that Jesus was himself the Way. But probably most famously he was the Apostle notably unconvinced by reports of the resurrection of Jesus, causing Jesus to show him the marks in his hands and feet and side. Thomas then proclaims the words that have been described as the great climax to John's gospel by saying to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"



We need to realize the largeness of a small work as well as the smallness of a great work, in order that on the one hand we may do least things grandly, and on the other grand things humbly.

[**Charles Henry Brent**, *Adventure for God*]

