

1. The Sanctuary: Church of Our Saviour

An organ prelude

The processional hymn

An opening prayer

2. The Sacristy: Eucharist, “I am the true vine”

Reading: Gospel of John, 15:1-12

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower.
He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit.
Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.
You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.
Abide in me as I abide in you.
Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the
vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.
I am the vine, you are the branches.
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart
from me you can do nothing.
Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and
withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and
burned.
If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you
wish, and it will be done for you.
My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become
my disciples.
As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.
If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I
have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that
your joy may be complete.

Reading: Henry Vaughan, The Holy Communion

Welcome sweet, and sacred feast; welcome life!
Dead I was, and deep in trouble;
But grace, and blessings came with thee so rife,
That they have quicken'd even drie stubble;
Thus soules their bodies animate,
And thus, at first, when things were rude,
Dark, void, and Crude
They, by thy Word, their beauty had, and date;
All were by thee,
And stil must be,
Nothing that is, or lives,
But hath his Quicknings, and reprieves
As thy hand opes, or shuts;
Healings, and Cuts,
Darkness, and day-light, life, and death
Are but meer leaves turn'd by thy breath
Spirits without thee die,
And blackness sits
On the divinest wits,
As on the Sun Ecclipses lie.
But that great darkness at thy death
When the veyl broke with thy last breath,
Did make us see
The way to thee;
And now by these sure, sacred ties,
After thy blood
(Our sov'rain good,)
Had clear'd our eies,

And given us sight;
Thou dost unto thy self betroth
Our souls, and bodies both
In everlasting light.
Was't not enough that thou hadst payd the price
And given us eies
When we had none, but thou must also take
Us by the hand
And keep us still awake,
When we would sleep,
Or from thee creep,
Who without thee cannot stand?
Was't not enough to lose thy breath
And blood by an accursed death,
But thou must also leave
To us that did bereave
Thee of them both, these seals the means
That should both cleanse
And keep us so,
Who wrought thy wo?
O rose of Sharon ! O the Lilly
Of the valley!
How art thou now, thy flock to keep,
Become both food , and Shepheard to thy sheep.

3. The Scenes from Jesus' Early Life

Reading: Mark 6:1-6

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them.

And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Reading: Mary Szybist, “Annunciation Overheard from the Kitchen”

I could hear them from the kitchen, speaking as if something important had happened.

I was washing the pears in cool water, cutting the bruises from them.

From my place at the sink, I could hear a jet buzz hazily overhead, a vacuum start up next door, the click, click between shots.

“Mary, step back from the camera.”

There was a softness to his voice but no fondness, no hurry in it.

There were faint sounds like walnuts being dropped by crows onto the street, almost a brush of windchime from the porch— Windows around me everywhere half-open— My skin alive with the pitch.

4. The Annunciation window, with a memorial dedication “blessed are the dead”

Reading: Sam Portaro: “The Annunciation”

Signs and wonders make us uncomfortable and challenge our confidence in what we hold to be fact (though, of course, even what we hold as fact is always subject to being revealed a fiction). So there is something about the story of Ahaz that touches our own experience. Even when God’s prophet, Isaiah, asks him for a sign, Ahaz declines. For his humility he is upbraided. “All right,” God replies to Ahaz, “if you won’t ask for a sign, I’ll give you one anyway.” Ahaz seems properly deferential, even devoted, in his demurral. After all, scripture adjures us to refrain from testing God. But it is one thing to test God and yet another to shy from God’s offer to engage our life. God attempts to initiate conversation with Ahaz, to which Ahaz in effect replies, “Thank you, but if it’s all the same to you, I’d rather not.” The annunciation is given as a proclamation. A meek and somewhat inexperienced young woman is visited by an angel, who announces that she is about to conceive and bear the child of God. The consummation of this conception will be carried out through the offices of the Holy Spirit. The woman is compliant, even grateful, for this intrusion into her life and body. But in the conversation between Mary and Gabriel there are echoes of the earlier conversation between Ahaz and God’s prophet. The angel greets Mary with the assurance that she is respected and that God is with her, but she, like Ahaz, is wary.

Hearing the angel's somewhat effusive greeting, Mary is deeply troubled and wonders what this greeting might mean, suggesting that Mary was not nearly so naive and inexperienced as we might have believed. She has obviously been around the block a few times and certainly knows that, wings and glistening raiment aside, a line is still a line and conversations that begin as that one did can lead to pretty strange, even disastrous, consequences. So the annunciation was not an announcement after all. It was the beginning of a conversation, and that is a different proposition altogether. What we see in these exchanges between Ahaz and God's prophet, and Mary and God's angel is a painful attempt at conversation. And God seems clumsy at this business of social intercourse. God does not do light banter or polite chit-chat, so Gabriel sounds like a grade-B movie thug and Isaiah delivers God's message with an impatient pushiness. Is God really so awkward as to meet Ahaz's reluctance with a brisk, "Oh, just take the sign anyway," or to greet the dubious Mary with, "Hi, you're a terrific woman and I've chosen you to have my baby?" God is certainly straightforward and blunt, especially for the kind of intimate and personal engagement experienced by Ahaz and Mary. And both Mary and Ahaz are right to be cautious with such invitations to engagement. Conversation is a dangerous business; it can change your life. Look at Mary and Ahaz. Neither was the same after their talks with God. Neither was God. The angel's conversation with Mary is the last blunt angelic intrusion in the scriptural narrative; only an occasional voice is heard thereafter. Even God seems to have honed the social graces and realized that there must be a better way to enter the conversation than by playing awkward games with prophets and kings and sending intimidating angels crashing into other

people's lives. After Mary we have the Word, and fewer words. God enters the conversation at our level, in a helpless and vulnerable infant who grew into a precocious but thoughtful child who grew into a gentle, even taciturn, man who said very little but carried on the most intimate of conversations in a life open for all to see. No more annunciations, only conversation—and a child born not as sign or wonder, but as invitation to intimacy, opening a conversation with power to change us all.

5. The Justice and Humility window: Micah 6:6-8

Reading: Denise Levertov, "The Jacob's Ladder"

The stairway is not
a thing of gleaming strands
a radiant evanescence
for angels' feet that only glance in their tread, and need not
touch the stone.

It is of stone.
A rosy stone that takes
a glowing tone of softness
only because behind it the sky is a doubtful, a doubting
night gray.

A stairway of sharp
angles, solidly built.
One sees that the angels must spring
down from one step to the next, giving a little
lift of the wings:

and a man climbing
must scrape his knees, and bring
the grip of his hands into play. The cut stone
consoles his groping feet. Wings brush past him.
The poem ascends.

Reading: Excerpt from John Winthrop's sermon

Now the onely way to provide ... for our posterity, is to followe the counsell of Micah, to *doe justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God.* For this end, wee must be knitt together, in this worke, as one man. Wee must entertaine each other in brotherly affection. Wee must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of other's necessities. Wee must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekeness, gentlenes, patience and liberality. Wee must delight in eache other; make other's conditions our oune; rejoice together, mourne together, labour and suffer together, allwayes haueving before our eyes our commission and community in the worke, as members of the same body. Soe shall wee *keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace.*

Source: <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>

6. The Martha and Mary window

Reading: Sam Portaro, "Martha and Mary"

Jesus had friends. Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus enjoyed a relationship to him different from that of the disciples. In his relationship to Martha and Mary, we see a man who claims two women as intimate friends, a most unusual reality in Jesus' day and culture, and hardly commonplace in our own.

The story of Jesus' visit with Mary and Martha recorded in the tenth chapter of Luke's gospel—Martha bustling over the meal and Mary entertaining Jesus—is familiar to most of us. Jesus seems to chastise Martha for her preoccupation with her busyness while extolling Mary for her leisurely hospitality. But it does not seem likely that any friend would impose such a divisive judgment between those he loved; whatever words passed between them were words of friendship, honest and sincere. Lacking his tone of delivery and the history of their long relationship, the words we have are out of context.

I am inclined to hear them as a kind of good-natured kidding exchanged among friends, not a rigid moral distinction between the virtues of one sister over another. We know nothing of how Jesus happened to come to this friendship, but my hunch is that it just happened. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were a gift to Jesus; this has certainly been the case of the best and dearest friendships of my life. The dearest friends—like Mary and Martha—have been the unlikely ones, the ones I would not have chosen for

myself, the ones who in some cases proved as awkward, even embarrassing, as they were enriching and lasting. The dearest of my friends have been people who have chanced into my life, people I have met on the way.

Our frustrated attempts at fashioning friendships often come to naught. Friendships would be easier if we could exert more control over them, could pick and choose and shape to our own liking those who would share our lives so intimately. Jesus might certainly have chosen more wisely and impressively than Mary and Martha, whose friendship probably did little to enhance his career or advance his agenda.

These things are important to remember, however, for the friends we need and in some instances deeply desire are likely very near at hand. God has planted them in our way—and has placed us in theirs. If we are lacking in friends, it does not mean that we are unlovable, or that we are unworthy; it may mean nothing more than that we have difficulty accepting the gifts God holds out to us in others.

Our prayer is that God might give us a will to love, might open our hearts to hear and strengthen our hands to serve those who come to us. These friends are a reminder that the dominion of God is, as we have been assured, very near at hand—and that those prepared to love us are even now among us.

Reading: excerpt from sermon #104 of St. Augustine

Martha was absorbed in the matter of how to feed the Lord; Mary was absorbed in the matter of how to be fed by the Lord. Martha was preparing a banquet for the Lord, Mary was already reveling in the banquet of the Lord. So while Mary was listening with such pleasure to his wonderful words, and her avidly eager mind was being fed by them, just imagine how afraid she must have been, when her sister appealed to the Lord, that he would say to her, "Get up and help your sister."

What about it, after all? Are we to suppose that Martha was reprimanded for her service, for busying herself with the cares of hospitality, for welcoming the Lord himself as a guest? How could she possibly be reprimanded for that, seeing that she rejoiced in welcoming such a guest?

And yet it's not like that.

Let us consider, then, our busy involvement with many things. Service is needed by those who wish to restore their tissues. Why is this? Because people get hungry, because they get thirsty. Distress calls for compassion.

So Martha did well to minister to the Lord in his mortal flesh and his bodily — I don't know what I should call it — his bodily needs, or bodily will, or his willed needs? But who was it in this mortal flesh? *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* There you have what Mary was listening to. *The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us (Jn 1:1, 14).* There you have what Martha was serving.

7. The Cross and Crown window

Reading: William Penn, “No Cross, No Crown”

There is a lawful and unlawful self; and both must be denied for the sake of Him, who in submission to the will of God counted nothing dear that He might save us.

The lawful self which we are to deny
is that convenience, ease, enjoyment, and plenty,
which in themselves are so far from being evil,
that they are the bounty and blessings of God to us,
as husband, wife, child, house, land,
reputation, liberty, and life itself;
these are God's favors,
which we may enjoy with lawful pleasure
and justly improve as our honest interest.

But when God requires them, at whatever time he calls for them or is pleased to try our affections by our parting with them; I say, when they are brought in competition with Him, they must not be preferred, they must be denied.

Christ Himself descended from the glory of his Father, and willingly made Himself of no reputation among men, that He might make us of some [reputation] with God; and, from the quality of thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, He humbled Himself to the poor form of a servant; yes, the ignominious death of the cross (Phil 2:5-8).

reading: Romans 8:31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

8. The Resurrection window

reading: I Corinthians 15:35-49

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable.

It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory.

It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust;
the second man is from heaven.

As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the
man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven.

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear
the image of the man of heaven.

9. The All Saints' window: Christ in Glory

reading: Revelation 12:10, paraphrased

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming
“Now has come the salvation,
and the power,
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Messiah,
for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down,
who accuses them day and night before our God.”

reading: Revelation 21: 1-7, 22-27

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth;
for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away,
and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,
coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

*"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;*

*he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no
more, for the first things have passed away."*

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."

Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."
Then he said to me,

"It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end.

To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

Its gates will never be shut by day – and there will be no night there.

People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.