



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – February 2004

Jack Probst Named to Search Committee for New Bishop

The election of a Bishop Coajudor for the Diocese of the Rio Grande is scheduled for Fall 2004. The first step in the election process is the formation of a committee to receive nominations and screen candidates. (For a complete description of the election process, see article below.) Jack Probst from St. James' has been asked by the Standing Committee to serve on the search committee. Jack has accepted. The first meeting of the committee will be in Santa Fe, NM on Monday, January 26th.



Jack Probst is retired from coaching and administration in the Texas public schools. His most recent administrative position was as Superintendent of the Big Bend High School in Terlingua. Jack has lots of experience with the dynamics of personnel searches in institutions. As our diocese searches for a new bishop, the Big Bend Mission is fortunate to have a person of Jack's caliber representing us. To make

suggestions, ask questions, or suggest a nominee, contact Jack.



A Little About Seth

Seth was born in Providence, Rhode Island and raised in the Society of Friends (Quakers). After graduating in Religion and Art History from the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, he worked for in food service and public relations at the Santa Fe Ski Area in Santa Fe, New Mex-



ico. After Santa Fe, he moved to Virginia to pursue an interest in horses and spent eight years operating an Arabian breeding farm. Seth currently owns and operates a nationwide employment service for horse people. He met Judy in 1989, when she was called to the Episcopal Church where he was treasurer. Judy and Seth were married in 1990 and moved to the Big Bend in 1993. Judy wanted to return to her native Texas, and Seth wanted to return to the mountains of the southwest.

The Election Process in a Nutshell

The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church read in part: "To provide an orderly transition in the office, a Bishop Coajudor, who shall have the right of succession, may be elected by and for the Diocese."

The major steps in the election process start with the formation of a search committee of lay and clerical members from around the Diocese. The search committee works on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Diocese to find at least three qualified persons as nominees. The Standing Committee makes information on the nominees available to the delegates to Diocesan Convocation and to the churches. Nominations may also be made from the floor of the Diocesan Convocation. An election is held at a regular or special Diocesan Convocation. To be elected, a quorum of clergy and lay delegates must be present, and a candidate must receive a majority vote in both orders (clergy and lay delegates).



If the election is successful, the Bishop-elect must accept the election, and the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church and the Standing Committees of the dioceses are notified of the election. In some cases, the Bishop-elect has been *(continued on page 2)*

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for this Diocese, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Seth is a graduate of the Education for Ministry program of the University of the South. "When I first became a clergy spouse, I said I would do almost anything except bake cookies for church events. Now I even bake cookies."

Election Process

(continued from page 1)

ordained as bishop before the current nomination and election. In many cases, the Bishop-elect is a priest and will need to be ordained as bishop. In the latter case, evidence of the election is provided to the Standing Committees of the dioceses along with other documents, including certificates from a licensed medical doctor and a licensed psychiatrist stating that the Bishop-elect is fit to undertake the work for which he or she has been chosen.

The Presiding Bishop then notifies every Bishop of this Church and requests a statement of consent or withholding of consent. Each Standing Committee must also give or withhold consent. If a majority of the Standing Committees consent, our Standing Committee notifies the Presiding Bishop, and if a majority of the Bishops consent, the Presiding Bishop shall take order for the ordination by three Bishops of the Church.

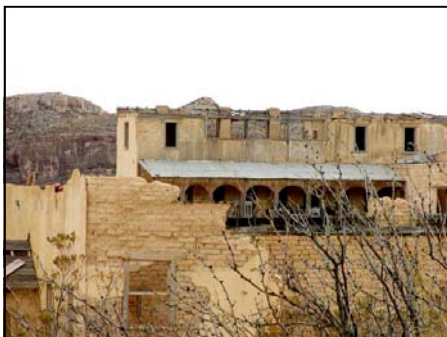
The process of electing a bishop is more complicated than outlined in this brief overview and can be confusing. For further details consult the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and in the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

Shrove Tuesday Supper



The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held at St. Paul's Marfa from 5 to 7pm on Tuesday, February 24th. Tom Graf and Don Viator are the chief

organizers this year. If they fail to ask you for help, why not volunteer? Everyone is welcome to attend.



Ruins of the School and the Perry Mansion in the Terlingua ghost town. photo - Elaine Ponton



The annual Big Bend Mission retreat will be at Terlingua Ranch Lodge February 27-29. Rooms at the lodge and R.V. spaces will be available. Pets are allowed. To reserve a room or R.V. space, call 432/371-2416. There is no fee to attend. You will be responsible for the cost of your room and meals. Scholarships are available.

Retreat Schedule

Friday, February 27th

5:00-6:00pm Arrival and Happy Hour
6:00pm Dinner
7:00pm-9:00pm First Session

Afternoon - Optional Activity or Free Time

6:00pm Dinner
7:00-9:00pm Third Session

Saturday, February 28th

8:00am Breakfast
9:00am-noon Second Session
12:00 noon Lunch

Sunday, February 29th

8:00am Breakfast
9:00-10:30am Final Session
11:00am Holy Eucharist

Last Month's Question: Why do we pray for the dead?

Answer: We pray for them because we still hold them in our love and because we trust that, in God's presence, those who have chosen to serve Him will grow in His love until they see Him as he is.

This Month's Question: What is the ministry of a bishop?

Defend the Faith, or Live the Faith?

Throughout the history of the Church right up to the present day there have been a variety of campaigns to defend and preserve the "true faith." Crusades, councils, and schisms have distracted the Church from its work of faith over and over again. Honest and meaningful discussions of doctrine and belief often have a way of descending into bitterness and alienation, making the walk of faith even more difficult. We become convinced that unless we take immediate action on God's behalf, the "true faith" will be lost forever.

This unfounded concern for coming to God's aid and helping Him shore up the Church distracts us from a life of repentant discipleship. We are so busy defending the faith that we have little time and spirit left for living it. The tragedy of all this superfluous effort is our failure to recognize that when the Christian faith is lived in its fullness, it is entirely self-defending. The Church has survived all these years not because of crusades, councils, and schisms. It has flourished because it is upheld by the Spirit of God in the hearts and minds of believers who let the love of God shine through their lives. The love of God is self-defending. It needs no help from would-be defenders of doctrine and belief. - Seth



Hard Questions



Moses and the water hazard

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Hymns Have a History

Hymn number 362, *Holy, Holy, Holy* by Reginald Heber (1783-1826)



Reginald Heber was a child of good fortune and intellect, born into a home of wealth and culture. At Oxford, he won two prizes for poetry; he was ordained after graduation and became rector in the little village of Hodnet in Shropshire, set in an idyllic pastoral landscape which is reflected in his poetry. One of his aims was to improve the singing in his church; he wrote to a friend “My Psalm singing continues bad. Can you tell me where I can purchase Cowper’s *Olney Hymns* to put in the seats? Some of them I admire much, and any novelty is likely to become a favorite and draw more people to join in the singing.” Since he did not find the hymns he wanted anywhere, he finally resolved to create a hymnal of his own, intended to be “appropriate to the Sundays and principal Holydays of the year; connected in some degree with their particular Collects and Gospels, and designed to be sung between the Nicene Creed and the

Sermon.” Heber spent his last three years as Bishop of Calcutta, where he died suddenly in a small pool in which he had sought refreshment after preaching a sermon about the evils of the caste system. The collection on which Heber had been working, entitled *Hymns, written and adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year*, was published by his widow shortly after his death.

His best known hymn, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, is based on the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation, in which John describes his vision of the Lamb of God upon a throne before which is “something like a sea of glass, like crystal.” (Rev 4:6) In front stand four living creatures, who sing without ceasing, “Holy, holy, holy the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” (Rev. 4:8)

“Holy, holy, holy” is also the song of the seraphim in Isaiah’s vision in Isaiah 6:2-3. “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” It is also, of course, the origin of the “Sanctus” in the Eucharist.

excerpted from Praise My Soul, Meditating on the Hymns by Nancy Roth, Church Hymnal Corp. 2001



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