

Executive Director Address

Noon, Friday, July 6, 2018

Brotherhood of St. Andrew Triennial National Convention

Embassy Suites Arboretum, Austin, Texas

The peace of the Lord be with you. (And also with you reply) Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, thank you for being in the midst of us at this special point in time. Thank you for the ministry you instilled in the hearts of your servants at St. Paul's Parish in Chicago back in 1883. Thank you for showing them the need of men and youth struggling with the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and ... yes mentorship. Thank you for creating a specific ministry in the church, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, that through the generations has turned countless faces of your children toward the love of Christ. May my words that follow continue to reflect Your hopes for our mission and ministry. Amen.

About this time last year I met some of you face-to-face for the first time at Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Louisville, Kentucky, just a couple of blocks away from your new national office. I wonder if I must have looked like a fish out of water flopping around on the ground. Maybe some of you think you're seeing that again this year. I hope not. What I do know from that summer is for the 2nd time in my life I made the largest leap of blinding faith to go places I had never ventured before. Done so under terms led by the Spirit of God rather than my own. Sometimes you have to walk toward that blinding light you can't see through or around no matter how terrifying it might be or where it might lead. I don't know about you, but I'm glad I did. I call it living into "Camp Surrender." Boy what a camp it is.

My initial charges by your Board last summer remain much the same today. Meet as many brothers as you can, forge new relationships within circles of the Church and renew others. Listen. Learn. Maintain a paid staff to meet the objectives set before you. Trust the volunteer leadership to do their job and you run the national office. I know I've probably fallen short on some of your hopes and maybe far exceeded others. Know this. I'm having the most personally rewarding time of my career. Your Board is an extraordinary group of leaders. I am humbled to be among you. Now, to the matters of this office you have re-instituted.

One of the first things I noticed was while the employees of the Brotherhood have and were maintaining a "virtual office" status and functioning pretty well in the 21st century with such, many in the Brotherhood and society in general were still trying to function in a 20th century model while the current generation was thriving in a 21st century model. I know because I am a product of that society trying to embrace what

those born after 1985 consider the norm. Most of them are already bored with it and looking to catch the next wave of technology, communication, commerce and lifestyle.

To the matters of running the office, you are blessed with an exceptional “Class A” downtown property to house the operations of this ministry. It’s quite a bargain now. In a few minutes you will learn what a superior arrangement it is about to become. I am grateful to our staff Sue Clausson, Jessica Shelton and Jim Goodson for riding this wave of change. At the first of the year I thought we had made a good arrangement with a couple of churches in the area to share employees, but it didn’t come to pass. At the same time I was exploring other possibilities for staffing needs. We are making progress there. Jessica’s husband Jeremy is now with a church in Charleston, SC, after graduating several weeks ago from Trinity in Ambridge. Jessica will maintain full-time employment with us for the foreseeable future from a virtual office. Nearly all the supplies and records are now housed in one of the vaults at the office building in Louisville. “The 620” as it is called, was built before the Depression as a bank. The vault we use has open interior dimensions of about 14x20 and has been made available at no additional cost to us, by the way. Nearly everything you’ve been used to knowing was stocked in Ambridge is now in Louisville. I will complete the securing of a bookkeeping/support staff specialist based over the next several weeks. In fact I have good candidates before me now. With advice and consent of the Board we now have a bank across the parking lot from our office handling our Operating Account. Over the next few months we will completely close relations with a bank that has been a day’s drive from Louisville over in Ambridge. I exercised an exceptional severance option with our bookkeeper Sue Clausson. She is now working part-time on a contract basis with us. Jim Goodson continues to be our Cross Editor and we’re glad he is with us at Convention. Please join me in expressing thanks to Jim for your years of service among us.

We have made some significant reductions in operational expenses. By New Year’s Eve of next year another of the very expensive equipment leases from Ambridge will terminate reducing expense \$4,000/yr. With your Executive Director now being full-time, the net effect this year and the year to come is a modest increase in overall operational expenses. We will be moving to digital-based Ministry Pledge renewals, registrations, supply request, chapters in good Ministry Pledge standing being able to vote via a secure web link, etc. while at the same time taking a hard look at a return to twelve printed editions of THE CROSS being mailed to you. For that to happen the Brotherhood must simply return to a much higher participation in Ministry Pledges and not the 50% currently in place. 50% participation will not make for a long-term sustainable ministry model given your current structure. In fact, if

that level of participation present today remains another 24 months everything changes.

In recent months I have been in conversation with counterparts in various ministries of the church, forging new relationships, introducing myself to countless people across the country in and out of both TEC and ACNA. We are catching the attention in church circles like not seen in decades. We have become quite the buzz. We have just completed the first half of the calendar year with a net gain in membership over the previous year. In light of the 2-3 year significant reduction in Ministry Pledges, I tasked Sue with reaching out to just over 80 of our 400+ chapters whose rolls were in the worst shape on Ministry Pledges. We had modest success there. That job...and it is a job...to reach out will continue. Our SVP, Jack Hanstein reminded me recently the responsibility of promoting Ministry Pledge participation falls on the senior leadership throughout the country and NOT on my shoulders or that of my staff. Somehow there is a mindset that we are loaded with cash and don't need ministry pledges. Nothing could be further from the truth. Frankly, I'm counting on you good souls to dispel this misconception. Why? We have too much to offer this hurting world to flounder now. You know it. I know it....and your Board is doing something about it with their checkbooks. Just look at what happened here yesterday afternoon. I am proud of your senior leadership committing routine giving of at least \$10/mo. to the ministries of the Brotherhood. You saw that in the budget yesterday. What you did not see was that your Executive Director has been doing twice that amount each month since shortly after being hired last June.

Up until my time with you I had not been exposed to a non-profit where board and senior level leadership weren't leading by example in routinely giving financially to the effort. In spite of rumors, we are NOT heavily endowed. In the "endowment world" we are barely endowed at all, with just over \$1.1m in trust. The scariest thing I saw with the Foundation when I got here was the complete absence of an Investment Policy Statement, proper filing status, and no active, engaged, professional money managers. That alone needlessly exposed the Brotherhood to unnecessary financial risk and litigation. Giving birth to a 501c3 myself when I was 25 I know in order to maintain tax-exempt status IRS regulations *require* the entity to spend down nearly all earnings annually. Failure to do can lead to disaster. After 30 years working in the insurance and investment field I know what was required for "good standard business practice." With regard to the Foundation, it did not exist with the Brotherhood. After dozens and dozens of hours of consults with seasoned legal and financial professionals that is all history now, PTL. At long last your endowment is now professionally managed by a highly respected institution, the Episcopal Church Foundation. It's an independent 501c3 entity from the church just like we are.

Remember the “even better news” about the office I said we’d get to? How about having twice the office space for the same amount of rent? Does that sound good to you? That is exactly what we will have in September/October as we move down one floor at The 620. Later this month I will meet with our contacts there to personally design our new space. Let me share with you why I am so excited about this and give you an example of God at work. This revelation comes after months of what I believe has been the Holy Spirit at work stirring in me the notion of “*The Center for Affiliated Ministries*” being located at The 620. In a matter of weeks we will have the space for it. We just need the ministry partners already well established in the church to share it with us. With Board approval I will pursue conversation with others in affiliated ministries. Imagine it; a central location for various ministries of the church with an interest in sharing human resources (ie. Payroll) to meet our mutual and related ministry goals. Once in place it would actually reduce our operating expense rather than increase it. In short it would make our budget and ministry have better use of time, talent and financial resources. At the same time we explode with a synergy among other existing ministry cells. Naturally, part of their staff, particularly the chief executives, may be virtual based. It’s the shared support staff that can be housed at The 620. By being with them daily we learn how overcome some of the same issues. They want to grow efficiently and effectively just like we do. I have floated the idea to some of my various counterparts in other ministries. They want to talk further about the possibilities. These things take time, mind you. The Holy Spirit has not finished getting all Her pieces in place for this to happen just yet but it’s exciting to watch it unfold. Join me in prayer, won’t you, that if it be the Will of God, nothing stands in our way to make it happen? The Center for Affiliated Ministries. Imagine it being housed with one of the premiere long-standing evangelism ministries of the church universal; the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. It’s time for all of us to move from a mind set of survival to a mindset of revival with the Center for Affiliated Ministries as a thriving part of the Jesus Movement. Do I hear an “Amen?”

Now, let’s look further to the future in the context of our specific ministries.

Thanks to Presiding Bishop Curry and our national chaplain, the Rt. Rev. Paul Lambert, the Bishop Advisory Council(BAC) is back for the first time in 30 years. Bishop Lambert’s doctor grounded him from flying, by the way and that’s why he’s not here. In the years to come the BAC will be a sounding board to the Board President & Executive Director and vice versa. Let me borrow your imagination as we look to our ministries and what active, engaged dialogue could produce.

Imagine the day when we as a society can move from the need to combat fighting addiction to and **recovery** from drugs, alcohol and pornography. That’s the Kingdom of God alive and well. *Imagine the day* when we can look to our **Veterans** (and others) who suffer with Post Traumatic Stress and confront it as a “condition in

life” rather than a “syndrome” or “disorder.” It’s neither a syndrome or a disorder. That’s the kingdom of God alive and well. *Imagine the day* when we’re not afraid to use and engage the “e” word; **evangelism** and we fully embrace it and what it does to change the world. That’s the kingdom of God alive and well. *Imagine the day* when all forms of **human trafficking** are no more. That’s the Kingdom of God alive and well. Imagine the day, *upon us now more than ever before*, when **Scouting** offers universal opportunity for the physical, moral and spiritual development of our youth regardless of gender, color, class or orientation. That’s the Kingdom of God alive and well. *Imagine the day* of **diversity** when we don’t live in fear or objection to views, cultures and lifestyles we may not understand or embrace ourselves. That’s the Kingdom of God alive and well. *Imagine the day* when we recognize and **reconcile** ourselves as a nation to the fact **racial discrimination** first began among our Native American Indians being driven from their homes to live as 2nd class citizens in a land that was theirs at the very start. I urge us to build real outreach to our Native American Indians. **Racial reconciliation and healing** is larger and deeper than we may want to admit and what you hear on the news. When work as earnestly with Native Americans in racial reconciliation and healing as we do Americans of African, Asian, Caribbean and Latino descent, THAT’s the Kingdom of God alive and well. And this last one hits very close to home for me as I have a 20 year-old daughter. *Imagine the day* when men start living a life with such a moral compass that the “Me Too Movement” is a single chapter in a social studies text book. **That** my Brothers is the Kingdom of God alive and well.

We are in a time where recent mass murders have, by in large, been committed by relatively young, normal looking white guys; even a series of package bombs here in Austin. Remember that face? Did that face look like a terrorist to you? Amidst these tragic losses I hear nothing on the solutions to confront the absence of teaching...of mentoring... the young in understanding the value of life itself and what it means to “love thy neighbor.” Brothers recall the Most Rev. Michael Curry’s statement, “If it’s not about love it’s not about God.” How do we return that to this world? I’ll tell you. It’s through prayer, study and service. As a society if we don’t include God in these efforts to build a better world we will fail. In fact, as a society we already have. Stand up for the dignity of every human being. We talk it. Let’s walk it right into every corner of our world. Every life matters.

In my career I have come to know what risk, morbidity and mortality tables look like. I have lived with them on a professional and personal level myself. I know where I stand among those tables and how I probably have fewer years ahead of me than I now have behind me. I have promised God, and I promise you, I’m going out trumpeting the message of Christ, waging compassion relentlessly in His Name. I hope to wage that with you for years to come. Won’t you join me in bringing new brothers to the ministry? Recall what ++Curry told us in this very room yesterday.

Listen to what Rev. Canon Scott Gunn will share tonight as our keynote speaker and Fr. Matt Marino from St. John the Devine/Houston will in the morning about ways we can be 21st century evangelists, what that looks like today...and then take it back to our communities. Christ is counting on us to do just that. We, the laity of the church, have the authority to do this. Will you continue to be the leaders back in your communities? Will you be pro-active in reaching out in the 21st century model to those born after 1985? They are an extraordinary group of people, remarkable in fact. We have all the company of heaven standing among us wanting us to be bold and authentic in showing this hurting world the way, the truth and the light of Christ. Can you do that? Will you do that? I am humbled to help you do just that.

For your kind attention these last several minutes, I thank you. To the brave men who signed the Declaration of Independence 242 years ago this week, nearly all of whom died penniless for it, I am inspired by what an example for us to be so bold for an ideal. Lastly, I want to remind you this moment was brought to you by the men and women who gave the full measure of their lives in the theaters of conflict on air, land and sea that we might be here today. To them I am eternally grateful. Let's turn their sacrifices into something beautiful through our tenants of prayer, study and service. . . something our Brotherhood been about since 1883.

In the Name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit let all of God's people say "Amen."