

St. Stephen's News

St. Stephen's Anglican Church,
Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XXII, Number 29

Edited by Anne Hawkins

July 26th, 2011

FROM THE RECTOR

The art of the insult is not “expletive deleted”

THE GREATEST enemy of literacy today is not the graphic sex, foul language and gratuitous violence that features increasingly in the television programs and movies we watch and the books we read.

Certainly, prolonged heavy breathing, four-letter words and the sound of pounded flesh do nothing to improve literacy – or advance the plot for that matter. But they are merely symptoms, not the disease.

The real enemy of literacy, I would contend, is “Spellcheck” – the computer program that enables us to check our spelling in an e-mail or college essay at the touch of a button. Just as the pocket calculator has diminished the average person's ability to perform simple mathematical calculations, so Spellcheck is responsible for shrinking their command of the language.

Spellcheck, you see, does away with our need to learn to spell, and this, in turn, eliminates our need for dictionaries. And dictionaries were the tool that people used to increase their vocabularies.

Thirty years ago, for example, a popular feature in *The Reader's Digest* was: “It pays to increase your word power.” Radio stations, moreover, earned a sizable chunk of revenue from advertisers offering surefire methods of improving one's ability to speak eloquently and persuasively by increasing one's vocabulary.

Today *The Reader's Digest's* circulation is in steep decline, while the folks who sell vocabulary enhancing books and tapes no longer seem to find it advantageous to advertise on the radio. Today's Americans don't seem much interested in articulacy or eloquence.

This declining interest in articulacy has not been without consequences. It is probably the factor most responsible for the coarsening of our culture.

William of Wykeham – founder of Winchester College, the great English school, and New College, Oxford – rightly observed that “manners maketh man,” but he might equally have added the corollary: “Language maketh manners.”

Forty years ago, President Richard Nixon was hideously embarrassed by the content of tape recordings of his discussions with aides in the Oval Office. The transcriptions made public were peppered with the words “expletive deleted.”

What embarrassed Nixon beyond measure was not so much the subject he was discussing, but the obscene and vulgar language he used to express his views.

It was language utterly incompatible with the dignity of the Oval Office. It was language that appalled the bulk of the electorate. And it was language that he would never have dreamed of using in front of his family and friends. But then, Nixon, in normal circumstances, was a mannerly and courteous man.

Today, obscenities that would have made Nixon and his aides blush are the currency of everyday speech. Lewdities, once confined to the barrack square and the ship's forecandle, color the speech not just of the “Great Unwashed” but what was once called “Polite Society.”

This casual everyday use the ugliest expletives by the gamut of people from dock workers and drivers to talk show hosts, from shop assistants to movie stars has totally devalued the epithet. When all speech is obscene, how can one tell when one's being insulted?

My father was certainly not prudish and prissy, but he despised folks who swore continually and routinely dished out obscene insults. It was, he claimed, the sign of a limited vocabulary.

This did not mean father was incapable of expressing his

displeasure. He was, in fact, the master of the elegant epithet or, if you prefer, the eloquent insult.

When he calls us “addle-pated clowns, “maggoty headed monsters” or “lily-livered loons.” His response to rudeness was “churlish dolt,” “urchin-snouted dog wart,” “prating clotpole” or “ill-bred bum-baily.” Uncalled for tears were shed by “mewling brats,” “whining toads,” or “sniveling scantlings.”

This is but a mere sample of the epithets at his disposal. Indeed, I remember my brother and I watching him give a rowdy soccer fan a voluble dressing down – lasting a good five minutes – during which he did not once repeat himself. The unfortunate recipient's response? An admiring: “Blimey, Guv.”

Father was by no means unique in this ability. Most people with a decent education and a mildly extrovert personality – especially schoolmasters – were equally expert in the realm of amusing eloquent insults.

It was you see a product of their education. They didn't learn much about sex or global warming, but they were very well versed in geography, mathematics and foreign languages, not least Latin and French – both wonderful sources of epithets and insulting epigrams.

But the primary source of their store of insults came from the study of English literature and religion – notably William Shakespeare and the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible.

That they mined Shakespeare, probably comes as no great surprise, but the King James Bible? How about “whited sepulchers” and “blind guides” for starters?

St. Stephen's Choir of Men & Boys

will sing the
Office of

Choral Evensong

6 pm, Sunday, August 7th, 2011

A reception follows

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR
THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

being Sunday, July 31st 2011

8.00 AM & 9.15 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

The Epistle: Romans 6:3-15

The Gospel: St. Matthew 5:20-26

11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER

The Psalter: Psalm 94:1-22

The First Lesson: Genesis 4:1-16

The Second Lesson: St. Matthew 5:20-26

Youngsters back then were rarely subject to “time outs” and similar modern disciplinary measures devised to avoid harming children’s self esteem. But then, back then, folks believed that self-esteem – like the esteem of society at large – had to be earned.

Eloquent dressings down were certainly not intended to enhance the self-esteem of the recipients, but to tell them to shape up. For youngsters, however, the colorful language softened the blow – and it gave us some fascinating words to look up in our dictionaries. . **GPH**

FROM THE PARISH CHEFS

Silly Summer Supper time

THE MOMENT you’ve been waiting has arrived. St. Stephen’s chefs are serving their Silly Summer Suppers again. Join us for good food and fellowship on Thursdays at 5.30 PM sharp..

Truth to tell, its hard to think of a less appropriate name than “Silly Summer Suppers” for these remarkable gastronomic events. The only thing silly about these suppers is the price.

Where else can you get a home-cooked entrée, dessert and salad for a meager \$10? Add to that soda for a buck and wine at \$3 per glass and \$5 for two.

✠ PARISH PRAYER LIST ✠

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the office at 410 560 6776.

RECOVERY: Sara, Michael, Tammy Sophie, Gracie, Paula, Blair, Jim, Georgetta, Melvin, Noah, Mavis, Heather, Laurie, Diane, Don, Lynn, Helen, Katherine, Hindra, Ravi, Elizabeth, Brian, Tracey, Linda, Robert, Nancy, Edithann, Doris, Jay, Perry, Amelia, Shirley, Adrian, Kimberly, Dean, Barb, Tanya, Jane, Brook, Val, Helen, Joseph, Joshua, Rachel, Carl, Cal, Catherine, Sam, Ruth, Kristi, Paul, Sue, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Jack, Grace, Bob, Fran, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erline, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, William, Betty, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tracy, Tom, Leliliah, Jennifer, Miriam, Karen, George, Eliza, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Marian, Steven, Jeanne, Ellen, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Robert, Christine, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, Bryan, Jason, Jane, Joan, Frances, Pat, Michael, Ray, Leslie, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Robert, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D’Metrius, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Alma, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Gloria, Lee Emily, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Linda, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, John, Gerardine, Thomas, Jeanne, Sister Catherine-Grace, Maxine, Ann Sharon, Dennis, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Rebecca, Dorothy, Joanne, ✠Albion, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian and Carol.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Rosa, June, Anna, Jean, Garrett, Ned, & Stephen, Rachel, Robert & Renee, Lydia; Richard, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Georgetta, Carolyn, Suzanne, Tony, Erik, Doris, Drake, Bobby, Kay & Emma, Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, David, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Tom, Susan, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, Jo Anne, Mary, Gregory, Isabel, Bobby, Dorothy, Darren, Scott, Rebecca, William, Charles, Joyce, Asfa, Eleanor, Kathy, Linda, James, Barry, Ann, Evelyn, Jeanette, Elizabeth, Virginia, Mildred, Chris, Stephen, Carol, Sandra, John, Mary, Michael and David

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: LTC R.J. Lytle, PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, USA; Lt. Benjamin Schramm, USMC; Lt. Alex Bursi, USN; Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt. Col. Harry Hughes, USAF.

✠ St. Stephen's Anglican Church ✠

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Rectory (410) 665-1278
Web Address: ststeve.com.

RECTOR: The Venerable Guy P. Hawtin

VICAR: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley

ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric

DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am -- Holy Communion

9.15am -- Holy Communion

(Nursery & Church School)

11.15am -- Morning Prayer

(1st. Sun. of the month: Holy Communion at 11.15am)

(1st Sun. of the month: Choral Evensong at 6.00pm)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday: 6.00pm Evening Prayer

Friday: Noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday: 5.00 PM Family Eucharist.

**COLLECTS FOR SUNDAY, TRINITY V
AND ST JAMES THE APOSTLE**

GRANT, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN*

Book of Common Prayer, Page 195

GRANT, O merciful God, that, as thine holy Apostle Saint James, leaving his father and all he had, without delay, was obedient to the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him; so we, forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy commandments; though the same thy Son Jesus Christ

our Lord. *AMEN*

Book of Common Prayer, Page 246

Return Service Requested

St. Stephen's Anglican Church
11856 Mays Chapel Road
Timonium, MD 21093

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
TIMONIUM MD
PERMIT NO.181