

Adult Education – St. Luke’s Church – Sedona, AZ – Class 15

Understanding & Using the Prayer Book – Cradle to Grave: Holy Baptism to Burial of the Dead

September 22, 2019

Note: for ease of accessing the web sites referenced in this handout, download your own PDF copy here: <http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/AdultEducation2019.html> and click on the live links in that copy. Questions or comments? Email me at dmc89az@gmail.com. Follow St. Luke’s on Facebook: “St. Luke’s Church Sedona AZ”.

I. Opening Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, who as a child didst learn, and didst grow in wisdom: Grant us so to learn thy holy Word that we may walk in thy ways and daily grow more like unto thee; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **Amen.** (*For Learners, A Manual for Priests, p. 273*)

II. Living a Sacramental Life

- A Sacrament is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” (BCP, p. 292)
- Life, even for the irreligious, is deeply sacramental in nature.
 - A school building is a sacrament of education; words are a sacrament of thought and meaning; sheet music is a sacrament of melody; etc.
 - The Christian life, from cradle to grave, centers on seven Sacraments.
 - Greater/Major – Holy Baptism and Holy Communion
 - Lesser/Minor – Confirmation; Holy Matrimony; Confession; Holy Orders and Holy Unction
 - Every Sacrament has a defined *Matter* and *Form* and must be performed by an authorized Minister.
 - Matter – the material substance used or the action taken in a Sacrament
 - Form – the words of administration of the Sacrament
 - While the Matter and Form may seem almost inconsequential, the benefits are great. (Think of an electrical switch starting a great factory in motion through the power of electricity. Wilson, p. 145.)

III. The Ministration of Holy Baptism

BCP, pp. 273-82

- Why Baptize? Because – like Holy Communion – Jesus commanded that we do so:
 - “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” (St. John 3:5)
 - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 28:19)
- The New Testament contains numerous examples of the importance of Baptism, such as:
 - “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” (Acts 38-9, 41)

- Phillip – a Deacon – after preaching to the Ethiopian eunuch baptized him. (Acts 9:27-39)
- After his dramatic conversion, Paul was baptized by Ananias. (Acts 9:18)
- *See also*, accounts involving Cornelius the centurion (Acts 10:48); the jailer at Philippi (Acts 16:33); and Lydia (Acts 16:15).
- The early practice of infant baptism is strongly implied in the accounts of the baptism of the households of Lydia and the Jailer at Philippi. Paul also notes that he baptized “the household of Stephanas.” (I Corinthians 1:16)
- A valid baptism is irrevocable and should never be repeated (although the Prayer Book does provide for Conditional Baptism if there is reasonable doubt about whether someone has been baptized at all or if the baptism was valid. (BCP, p. 282)
- Baptism is so important that even a lay person may perform a baptism in extreme cases, followed by later reception in the Church if possible (BCP, pp. 281-2).
- Read St. Luke’s materials on Holy Baptism here:
<http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/Sacraments/Baptisms.html>

IV. The Offices of Instruction (and Catechism)

pp. 283-95 (*see also*, 577-83)

- The “Offices” – introduced in the 1928 Prayer Book – are in two parts, and are intended to be used as a service in the church.
- Content is very similar to the Catechism.

V. The Order of Confirmation

BCP, pp.296-99

- Preaching in Samaria, Philip – again, a Deacon – baptized numerous converts. (Acts 8:5-12). However, he later sent for the Apostles Peter and John to lay hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost. (Acts 8:14-17)
- Similarly, when Paul converted certain Corinthians who had previously been baptized into John the Baptist’s baptism, he baptized them “in the name of the Lord Jesus” and then laid hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost. (Acts 19:1-7)
- Confirmation is commonly misunderstood as “joining” the Church.
- Instead, “Confirmation is the completion of Baptism. By Baptism one is admitted into the Kingdom of God; in Confirmation one receives spiritual strengthening to live a Christian life within the Kingdom.” Wilson, p. 188
- **“It is a kind of lesser ordination to the ‘priesthood of the laity.’ It is not merely something which we do but something which is done to us. We do not confirm ourselves. We *are* confirmed.”** Wilson, p. 189. (“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (I Peter 2:9))
- In the early Church, Baptism and Confirmation often occurred at the same time (usually on Easter), following a long period of instruction.
- Once the persecution of Christians ceased in 313 A.D. under Constantine’s reign, the widespread practice of infant Baptism eventually led to postponing Confirmation until the candidate had reached “years of discretion;” had received adequate instruction; and a Bishop could be available.

- Read St. Luke’s materials on Confirmation here:
<http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/Sacraments/Confirmation.html>

VI. Holy Communion

BCP, pp. 67-89

- See last week’s handout and video.

VII. The Solemnization of Holy Matrimony

BCP, pp. 300-04

- Distinguish the terms “marriage,” “wedding” and the “Solemnization” of a marriage:
 - Marriage consists of mutual consent of a man and a woman to live together as husband and wife. (A minority of states recognize “common law marriage”.)
 - A wedding is the ceremony by which this consent is certified and made public.
 - Solemnization is the blessing by which the Church sanctifies the union.
- Note that the man and the woman are the Ministers of the Sacrament. (*See* Chart, p. 8)
- Marriage is a mystical union – “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, **even as Christ also loved the church**, and gave himself it it...For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. **This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**” (Ephesians 6:32)
- The Church upholds the historic standard of lifelong marriage, “[t]hen it attempts to deal with people as generously as possible without sacrificing the standard.” (Wilson, p. 196).
- Remarriage requires a dispensation from the Bishop (*i.e.*, a priest may not grant such a dispensation).
- Read the requirements and guidelines for Marriage at St. Luke’s here:
<http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/Sacraments/Marriages.html>

VIII. Confession

- On the evening of the first Easter, Jesus appeared to his disciples and showed them his hands and his feet. His next action is highly instructive:
 - “Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; **Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.**” (St. John 20:21-23)
- This Apostolic authority to forgive sins (also delegated to Priests but not Deacons) is reflected in several ways in the Prayer Book:
 - The Absolutions in Morning and Evening Prayer (BCP, pp. 7, 24) and in Holy Communion (BCP, 76)
 - The Second Exhortation: “[I]f there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other Minister of God’s Word, and open his grief; that he may receive such godly counsel and advice, as may tend to the quieting of his conscience, and the removing of all scruple and doubtfulness.” (BCP, p. 88) Note

this is indicated as a condition precedent to worthily receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

- The Visitation of the Sick: “Then shall the sick person be moved to make a **special confession** of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any matter; after which confession, on evidence of his repentance, the Minister shall assure him of God’s mercy and forgiveness.” (BCP, p. 313)
- While the Prayer Book does not set forth Confession as a mandatory Sacrament (like Baptism and Holy Communion), it clearly contemplates the continuance, availability and importance of this Sacrament even after the Reformation.
- The seal of the confessional applies to all such Confession and may be waived only by the penitent.
- Read St. Luke’s materials on Confession and Penance here:
<http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/Sacraments/Penance.html>

IX. The Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth (Commonly called the Churching of Women)

BCP, pp. 305-07

- This Office has its roots in the Jewish tradition of the “purification” of women who were considered to be “unclean” for forty days after giving to a male child and eighty days after giving birth to a female child.
- During this time, the woman was not allowed to enter the Sanctuary of the Temple or to touch holy objects.
- At the end of the period of uncleanness, the mother brought a sacrifice to the priest, who then made atonement for her. (Leviticus 12:1-8)
- The remarkable story of Mary’s participation in this ceremony is told in Luke 2:22-39:
 - The Song of Simeon (*Nunc dimittis*): “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace...” (the second canticle of Evening Prayer (BCP, p. 28)
 - “...a sword shall pierce through thine own soul...”
 - Anna the Prophetess “spake likewise of [Jesus] to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”
- This important event is commemorated in the Kalendar as a Holy Day on February 2 (forty days after The Nativity of our Lord) as “The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly called The Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin.” (BCP, pp. 231-33)
- The focus of the Prayer Book service is on thanksgiving and – sadly – is rarely used.
- Notice that the final Rubric strongly echoes Leviticus in one way: “[t]he Woman, that cometh to give her Thanks, **must** offer accustomed offerings, which shall be applied by the Minister and the Church-wardens to the relief of distressed women in child-bed.” (BCP, p. 307)

X. Visitation of the Sick & Holy Unction

BCP, pp. 308-20

- Infrequently administered precisely in the form set forth in the Prayer Book because the rubrics afford the Minister great latitude in adapting the Office to the particular needs of the situation.

- Note the Prayers at pages 315-17 which provide particularly helpful options for prayers by the laity. (*See also*, the Collects at page 597-8 – *For the Recovery of a Sick Person; For One about to Undergo an Operation; and For Those in Mental Darkness*)
- Holy Unction (BCP, p. 320)
 - Jesus, the Twelve Disciples and the Early Church
 - Jesus often healed the sick merely by the laying on of hands (*e.g.*, cleanses a leper (St. Matthew 8:1-4); heals Peter’s mother-in-law of a fever (St. Matthew 8:15); heals a woman crippled for 18 years (St. Luke 13:13)
 - The use of oil was also common – a practice inherited from Judasim:
 - “And they [the Twelve Disciples] cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.” St. Matthew 6:13
 - “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders [priests] of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” James 5:14-45.
 - By the time of the Reformation, this Sacrament had largely been relegated to Extreme Unction.
 - The 1928 Prayer Book restores the usage of the Early Church by clarifying that the Sacrament is available to “any sick person.” (First Rubric, BCP, p. 320)
 - “The rite has no magic power, of course, to cure illness, nor is it in any way a substitute for medicine and all the means modern science has made available to us. It is rather a ‘sacramental’ rite that signifies by an outward and visible sign a spiritual grace of strengthening, renewing, and healing of the soul.” Shepherd, p. 320.
 - From St. Luke’s Service Leaflet: “Unction and special prayers take place at each mass. After receiving the Sacrament, return to the Altar Railing after everyone has received, kneel and wait for the Celebrant to come to you. When he arrives, tell him your prayer request, and he will respond appropriately. Prayers can be for thanksgivings (wedding anniversaries, birthdays, etc.) and/or Unction – laying on of hands for sickness, both physical and spiritual.”
 - Notice the Rubric at page 320 of the Prayer Book which admonishes the Minister to remind the people to make their wills and to “leave Bequests for religious and charitable uses.”

XI. The Communion of the Sick

BCP, pp. 321-23

- In the Early Church, Communion was routinely taken to the sick and to those who were otherwise unable to attend regular services.
- In medieval times, Communion of the Sick was generally only administered following the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.
- The 1928 Prayer Book reflects the Reformers’ desire to make Communion of the Sick available to anyone who – because of sickness or other good cause – is unable to attend regular, Sunday services.
- It is almost always administered from reserved sacrament.

- This second Rubric on page 323 of the Prayer Book outlines the conditions for “Spiritual Communion” by the sick or by anyone who for other “just impediment” is unable to physically receive the Blessed Sacrament.
- Note that this Rubric, as well as the first Rubric on page 321, specifically refer to the Sacrament of the **Body and Blood** of Christ, supplementing the twelve other instances noted in last week’s handout.

XII. The Burial of the Dead

BCP, pp. 324-342

- Simple, dignified and short.
- Over time, burial services had become much more elaborate than those of the Early Church. The Reformers also felt that the doctrine of Purgatory had led to an unfortunate shift in emphasis from triumph, joy and comfort to the living to “a plea for mercy and assistance to the departed.” (Shepard, p. 324.)
- The Office may or may not be used in conjunction with a Requiem Mass (*see* Propers for that at pages 268-9 of the Prayer Book).
- Although this Office clearly contemplates the presence of a physical body, there is no rule against cremation.
- Notice the separate Office for Burial of a Child (BCP, pp. 338-342) and accommodation for Burial at Sea (BCP, p. 337).
- Read about St. Luke’s Memorial Garden here:
<http://www.episcopalnet.org/DBS/Sedona/Sacraments/Burial.html>

XIII. Holy Orders

(BCP, pp. 529-74)

- September 29 Adult Education Class – Apostolic Succession and the Ordinal

XIV. Closing Prayer

O Almighty Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that, through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.** (Concluding prayer from The Order of Confirmation, BCP, p. 298)

XV. Sources

- Boss, N. *The Prayer Book Reason Why* (5th ed.). NY: Morehouse-Barlow Co. 1942.
- Cox, W. *The Heart of the Prayer Book*. Richmond, VA: Dietz Press 1945.
- Crum, R. *A Dictionary of the Episcopal Church* (18th ed.). Runnemede, NJ: Trefoil Publishing Society 1967.
- Shepherd, M. *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*. NY: Oxford Univ. 1950.
- Wilson, F. *Faith and Practice* (revised ed.). Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing 1967.

The Rev. David M. Cooper, Deacon, St. Luke's Church, Sedona, AZ

Sacraments of the Church¹

Sacrament	Matter	Form	Benefits	Minister(s)
Holy Baptism	Water (BCP, p. 279)	Immersion or Affusion and Invocation of the Holy Trinity (BCP, p. 279, 281)	Death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, whereby we are made the children of grace (BCP, p. 292)	Bishop or Priest, or Deacon in the absence of either; any lay person in an emergency
Holy Communion	Bread and Wine (BCP, p. 80)	Words of Institution; Prayer of Consecration (BCP, pp. 80-81)	Strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ (BCP, p. 293)	Bishop or Priest
Confirmation	Laying on of hands (BCP, p. 297)	Prayer for the Holy Spirit (BCP, p. 297)	Spiritual strengthening to live a Christian life	Bishop
Holy Matrimony	Mutual consent and covenant to live as husband and wife	Declaration of such consent (“I do”)	“The officiating priest adds the Church’s blessing by which the benefit of God’s help is introduced to make the marriage true and permanent.” (Wilson, p. 198)	The Man and the Woman who are being united in marriage
Confession	Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction	Declaration of absolution	Spiritual cleansing and reconciliation with God and His Church	Bishop or Priest
Holy Orders	Laying on of hands (BCP, pp. 534, 546, 558)	Prayer to the Holy Spirit for the particular office to which the candidate is being ordained (BCP, pp. 534, 546, 558)	Transmission of Apostolic authority and grace to fulfil the functions of the office to which one is ordained	Bishop
Holy Unction	Anointing with oil and/or laying on of hands (BCP, p. 320)	Prayer to the Holy Spirit for strength to overcome the attacks of illness (BCP, p. 320)	Refreshing and reinvigorating of spiritual powers which in their turn have their effect on one’s physical condition	Bishop, Priest or Deacon; authorized lay person

¹ Freely adapted from Wilson, *Faith and Practice*