

Weekly Musing † February 13, 2012

I have said something about St. Valentine in previous years. As a recap, the symbol we use for Valentine's day, a heart, comes from the Silphium plant of Cyrene (modern day Libya). Its seeds were in the shape of a heart. The seed was an effective birth control remedy. The astute have long noted that the "heart" in no way represents the shape of a human heart. Below is a coin from my collection that dates to around 340 B.C. It is from Cyrene and shows the silphium seed which was the main export of this area for centuries. We know virtually nothing about St. Valentine though we have two legends of two different martyrs of the early period by that name. The feast of St. Valentines was promulgated by the church to replace Lupercalia, a festival around this time of the year that



featured festivities that were in no way Christian and whose details you would not thank me for sharing. Love is of course a Christian virtue but no virtue or emotion, however laudable, supplants the primacy of Christ.

Thomas Bray was an Anglican priest who lived from 1656 – 1730. He was not a martyr, had no dramatic conversion and was never a bishop. He is not a saint in the older sense of the word but he is commemorated among other things for founding some four score

church libraries, many of them in the United States, then a colony of Great Britain. Priests were notably poor and could rarely afford their own books. His organization, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, still exists and sees that learned theological books go where they are needed. He also formed another society for evangelizing the British colonies called the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. In a world where emotional Christianity has outpaced rational Christianity in popularity, Bray is a reminder of our unapologetic learned stance on the faith.





Some of you know Mary Julia Jett. She has been active in this diocese doing youth work for quite some time. She is now in New York City at The General Theological Seminary in her second year of studies (seminary is three years after college). She was ordained to the Diaconate on February 6 at St. Mary the Virgin in New York City. St. Luke's Memorial Foundation has been generous enough to help with her expenses. General Seminary, where the bishop sends our candidates, costs \$50,000 a year. It is surprising how many conveniently believe the church pays for seminary education. She is from St. James Church in Bozeman. Hopefully Mary can pay us a visit at some point and preach. She sends her thanks to the Memorial Foundation and the parish for their support.



News from St. Luke's

The **ECW** meets Saturday, February 18, in the Guild Room.

Remember that **Youth Confirmation** starts Wednesday, February 15th, at 5 pm in the library.

Ash Wednesday services, February 22, at noon and 7 pm.

Stations of the Cross every Friday in Lent at noon. Church calendars are available for free in the back of the church. Lenten reading materials are also found there.

Soup and bread lectionary study starts Tuesday, February 28, from 6– 7:30 pm.

Don't forget the **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** on Tuesday, February 21, from 5:30–6:30 pm. The vestry meets immediately after.



*The Rev. Canon Gary Waddingham
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