

## Weekly Musings ✚ January 31, 2011

Saturday is the feat of the Martyrs of Japan. Though that term is often associated with the 26 Nagasaki martyrs, there are in fact thousands of Japanese martyrs. Christianity came into Japan first by the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier in the 1500s. In 1632, 26 Christians, mostly Franciscans but also two boys, were tied to crosses and stabbed to death. The reasons for this are complex. In addition to inter-Nicene political machinations in Japan, foreign missionaries were treated skeptically as pawns of foreign powers. Of course on occasion that was true. Later on many thousands of Japanese Christians were martyred.

*Nagasaki martyrs monument. Note the two boys.*



When Christianity was allowed in Japan again in the latter half of the nineteenth century, it turned out that Christians had survived in Japan without Bibles or priests for 250 years. Though their theology was not well remembered they remembered the person of Jesus Christ. For Americans this length of time is more than the time we have been independent from England.

When Japan was opened up to missionaries again in the latter part of the 19th century, Anglicans formed the Anglican church in Japan called the Nippon Sei Ko Kai. One might wonder why a relatively small church in an oriental country has any impact at all. The hallmark of historic Anglicanism and other historic churches in foreign countries, is what they brought with them. The Anglican Church in Japan established boy's schools, girl's schools, orphanages, leprosariums and universities. The Anglican university in Tokyo was originally called St. Paul's. It is now called Rikkyo University. It has approximately 20,000 students and an endowment approaching half a billion dollars.

*An old picture of the chapel at then, St. Paul's University in Tokyo.*



The Anglican Church throughout the world has established many schools and universities. Recently one was burned down in a Muslim part of India due to the threat of an ignorant American pastor to burn a Koran. That particular school had survived WWI, WWII, the partition of India, the partition of Pakistan and many other things, but not one ill-informed fundamentalist in America. Often these Anglican schools have educated the leadership of many countries for over a century. Educated Christianity is less and less the norm in our own country. I am convinced that uneducated Christianity will eventually do more harm than good.

### News from St. Luke's

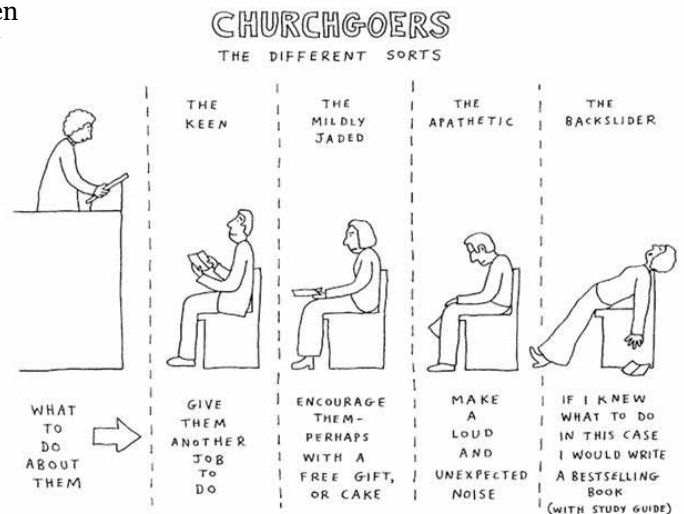
*The above cartoon is by Dave Walker. I pay a yearly license (a bit less than \$47) to use them.*

This is about as long an Epiphany as we get. Ash Wednesday isn't until March 8 and Easter is April 24. This year we will be doing Lent stuff on Tuesday night (except when we have vestry) so that we can continue the youth group on Wednesday. We also intend to have an ongoing Bible study with a potluck on Tuesdays. We need layreaders to do the Stations of the Cross on Fridays.

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) is doing a survey

on our older parishioners who might need some help. I know many of you don't consider yourselves older but remember if they send you a letter it isn't because you look or act old, it is because you seem so wise.

Several of us were at the Rescue Mission yesterday evening to prepare and serve food. We do this about every two months. We don't seem to have quite enough people to fix the food which is a big job. When we next do the Sunday meal at the Rescue Mission, March 13, we need some help cooking the day before. This would be a good project for the Saturday church people. We could come to church a couple of hours early and help. If someone volunteers to be the head cook, you probably will only have to do this once a year if we get enough people. We don't want to burn out a few people. This is important ministry. Someone in the church pays for the meal (about \$300) we buy the food, cook it, and serve it. Aren't you proud to be part of a church that does this? Sure you are.



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