

CATHEDRAL LIFE

Autumnal Greetings

The Very Reverend Canon Anne Sawyer, *Interim Dean & Priest-in-Charge*



Happy Fall! Autumn is a season that is all about transitions from long days of light to shorter days, warm weather to cooler temps, green leaves to beautiful yellow, orange, and red ones; from baseball to football, from one season to the next. I suspect that some of us love the fall, while others long for the past season. Yet, we know that each season is essential for the cycles of life and rebirth. Our faith teaches us this too.

In case there hasn't been enough change in our Cathedral life, there is more news to share, dear people of God.

Most of you know that St. John's has this significant building development project underway, to be built on the square block surrounding the church. The image of the housing community that you may recollect was designed by Handel architects. Both the design and architect were woven into the lease agreements signed by the former Deans in August of 2022 prior to their departure. Yet, by January of 2023 changes were already underway as a result of global and national financial markets, interest rates and prohibitive building costs.

In response, our building development team began the process of seeking positive solutions to honor our contracts. Initially, it was the decision to no longer excavate for underground parking, then changes in the building structure and project timeline (moving it forward, not back). More recently, we learned about the possible change in architect as well. Please know, we have been atop of all proposed changes, always seeking transparency, and in communication with our legal team at every step along the way.

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As we saw change unfolding, Canon Lurelean Gaines and I knew that a Building Development Committee would be essential to making wise collective decisions. This committee represents the Cathedral, the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, and broader community, including professionals who are gifting us with their expertise. While the committee as a whole has only met once to create a shared common based of knowledge, a sub-group of experts have been actively engaged, and are knowledgeable about everything that has happened thus far.

After reaching a critical decision point last month, I am pleased to say that we are back in step with our development team. Handel is back on the job working on a new design, we are committed to moving forward together, and are excited about learning from past designs. There is the goal to break ground on the Flower side of the Cathedral and along 27th Street by Fall 2024.

We have the opportunity to carry forward the best of the past and present, and discern how God is leading us forward, remembering that we are not alone. God is with us. It is through the seasons of life that new life and growth occurs. Let us give thanks for our partners and guides along the way. The future is bright for St. John's, thanks to all of you.

UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2023



ALL SAINTS & SOULS

November 5, 2023

9:00 am

Honoring the saints of the Church, known and unknown.

FOOD PANTRY

November 18, 2023

8:30 am—10:30 am

Providing the community with free groceries while supply lasts.

CHRIST THE KING

November 26, 2023

8:00 am & 10:00AM

Celebrating Christ as prophet, priest, and king.

Prayers for Purpose in Times of Transition

Canon Lurelean Gaines, *Senior Warden*



Throughout the Pandemic a group of us continued to volunteer for St. John's Cathedral Food Pantry once a month on the third Saturday of the month.

On the 18th of March 2023 I volunteered as usual for the Food Pantry, went home to change clothes, and returned for my husband's Memorial Service. It was the first time that I met The Very Reverend Anne Sawyer, Interim Dean and Priest-in-Charge. I was greeted with condolence, and as her hands touched mine, I said to her "One hand is cool and the other is warm." She continues to have a smile on her face through good times and very challenging times. The Very Reverend Anne Sawyer is a gift to St.

John's Cathedral in this time of transition. She remains fully transparent.

During the Pandemic, the Rosary Group continued to pray using telephone conference calls, which allowed the group to maintain health and safety for all members that were potentially at risk. Thanks to Kyle, I would receive prayer request for members of the congregation and the names were immediately added to my daily prayer list, shared with the Rosary Group members, and Bishop F. Brookhart.

The Rosary Group was informed that I would begin my journey back to face-to-face services at St. John's Cathedral on Easter Sunday the 9th of April 2023.

Every day I prayed to God thanking Him for the gift of life, and the many blessings he bestowed on me and my family. I am reminded of the scripture that reads, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don't forget to thank him for his answers." I asked God to guide me in the direction that would lead me to do the work He had for me to do. I needed purpose! I was eager to get back to that which gave me pleasure at St. John's, such as the LEMs for 8:00 mass, sub Deacon as needed, and Intercessory prayers at 10:00 mass as assigned. I am so grateful. God gave me purpose!

Today I find myself back on the vestry as the Senior Warden working with The Very Reverend Sawyer, addressing challenges and concerns, problem solving, attending meetings, and establishing new relationships and rekindling old positive relationships with organizations and individuals who value St. John's Cathedral and its congregation. The people are the church, and we gather in the structure.

I am sincerely grateful to be back actively engaged in the work that needs doing. We are so blessed to be able to transition together through eyes of love, kindness, compassion, inclusion, and patience. We're in this together sharing our time, talent, and treasure as we walk in the light. Thanks be to God!

The Lord be with us all, as we transition together remembering our history and embracing our future.



COMPLINE

November 5, 2023 at 8:00pm

December 3, 2023 at 8:00pm

January 7, 2024 at 8:00pm

ABOUT COMPLINE

Compline at St. John's Cathedral is a contemplative service of candlelit prayer sung on the 1st Sunday of each month. Since the 6th century, Compline has been the last monastic office of prayer before the close of day. The short liturgy is divided into several sections: the chanting of psalms, scripture, and prayers, and it owes much of its form to St. Benedict (480-547).



We invite you to allow the words and music of this service to wash over you and penetrate your inner being. Periods of silence are offered to deepen your interior reflection.

Join us for Compline services on the 1st Sunday of each month at 8:00 pm. A time of food and fellowship will immediately follow service.

www.stjohnsla.org

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Los Angeles, CA 90007

Camino Transitions

Christopher G. Gravis, *Canon for Music and Cathedral Arts*

I spent the month of September walking the *Camino de Santiago*, along the “Camino Frances,” from St. Jean Pied de Port in the Basque region of southern France to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain. This ancient path has been traversed by Christian pilgrims for nearly 1,000 years. It was a spectacularly transformative experience for me, and those I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I was most surprised that the spiritual experience was different than I could have ever imagined.

Few things in life turn out as we might have previously imagined they would. Walking the *Camino* over 27 days was no different for me, and I continue to unpack the experiences with each passing day. I have come to believe that, for me, the daily motion of rising, walking, nurturing friendships, and resting, was the spiritual experience provided for me in the journey.



I saw the most arresting sunrises of my life. I made friends and broke bread with people of no common language other than smiles and gestures of gratitude. The sights, smells, and sounds were exciting and new. But admittedly, I felt some initial disappointment part way through. After all, wasn't this supposed to be the “Path of Miracles”? When was I going to come across my own burning bush, or encounter Christ himself on the path? I was only encountering a muddy trail, soggy french fries with lunch, and the occasional surly nun. It was as if I was saying, “I came all the way here and showed up, God. When are you going to reveal your glory to me?”

Through the discipline of each day's walk, the spiritual experience began to come into focus. The transition moment occurred when I came to embrace that the *Camino* was not merely something you show up for and wait for God to encounter you. It was through the daily act of pouring myself into the *Camino* that I encountered the spiritual gifts abundantly present all around. The opportunity to quiet myself (which took a few weeks!), just exist, and pro-actively be present was the spiritual sabbatical I deeply needed. I am grateful, especially to the people of St. John's, for allowing me this chance to recharge, and I return with a new energy for our future together. I've spent the last month thinking about this realization presented to me on the *Camino* – that it is often human nature for us to sit back *waiting* for something divine to occur; when in fact, the most spiritually rich experiences seem to occur once we pour ourselves into something.

I have also come to realize that this time of transition at St. John's Cathedral is no different. We're in discernment as a community to call a new Dean, and to enter an entirely new chapter in the life of this community. In many ways, we're all walking a *Camino* together. It would be easy to take a back seat and wait for others to make the important decisions, hoping something divine arises that will inspire us. That might work, as miracles do happen. However, I believe the richest spiritual blessings will occur when we each pour our unique selves and experiences into this process.

Every day through these months of parish discernment, and eventually through the coming years of building development, we will be walking together on the pilgrim path. We're all in this journey together, and I am grateful to each of you. I share with you a hymn I sang to myself almost daily on my *Camino*, words from *Pilgrim's Progress* by the 17th-century writer John Bunyan:

*He who would valiant be
'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy
follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent
to be a pilgrim.*

*Who so beset him round
with dismal stories,
do but themselves confound—
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might,
though he with giants fight;
he will make good his right
to be a pilgrim.*

*Since, Lord, Thou dost defend
us with Thy Spirit,
we know we at the end
shall life inherit.
Then, fancies, flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labor night and day
to be a pilgrim.*



Canterbury USC has a long history of working with the students and providing them with resources, chaplains, and fellowship. St. John's helped form Canterbury USC almost a hundred years ago and for the past three decades, The Reverend Glenn Libby has been serving the students with passion, presence, and purpose.

In October, we began to offer a weekly contemplative service on campus. Every Tuesday night at 7:30 pm, we meet in the Kilgore Chapel located on the ground floor of the University Religious Center. The lights are dimmed, the candles lit, and we sit in silence. Those who attend can be guided in their meditation by prayers and readings that I bring for each service. The gatherings are quite a contrast to the typical worship offerings brought to the campus, and we are hoping that this quiet spiritual practice will be viewed as a welcome alternative. The service is open to all students, faculty, and staff, as well as to members of St. John's. Please feel free to join us. And, if you wish to support our efforts in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Blessings,

The Reverend Mel Soriano,
Associate Chaplain of Canterbury USC
msoriano@stjohnsla.org

I look forward to this pilgrim journey together, my friends.

Generosity and Gratitude

Rosalind Vernon, *Stewardship Commission Chair*



We write to you in the spirit of gratitude for your presence, gifts of time and talent, and for blessing us at St. John's simply by participating in church services on-line or in person. Whether you have attended St. John's for 40+ years, are a recent congregant, or find yourself somewhere in between, you are loved with equal fervor by Christ.

Since reopening our Cathedral doors after the critical covid period, our pews have begun to fill in larger numbers and the palpable joy of being together again has spread throughout our church family. Dormant commissions are being revived, new ones added, and we have embarked on the challenging and rewarding process of celebrating our past and reimagining our future together. We are an evolving community, and this process will enable us to collectively generate an inspired vision and mission for St. John's; A vision and mission that will capture the hopes, dreams, values, and practices that we as a diverse church community consider important for the present and future generations of St. John's Cathedral members.

We thank you in advance for your contributions to this process and would like to request your contribution in another form. Stewardship season is upon us, and we are appealing to your generosity to help sustain St. John's and propel it into the future with a solid financial foundation. Contrary to popular belief, St. John's is not wealthy. The beauty of this magnificent Cathedral creates the false impression that this sanctuary of Christ is rich (well, of course it is in spirit), but it could benefit tremendously from your financial support.

The ministry of Stewardship is about receiving God's blessings from those to whom we minister. And, to paraphrase from Reverend James Lee Walker's sermon on rediscovering lay ministry, we must recognize that we are the hands, hearts, eyes, ears, mouth, and presence of Christ in our daily life inside and outside the church. We are all missionaries and we do not need to go abroad to help others. We can begin here at St. John's by letting the Holy Spirit guide our generosity. So, today we appeal to you for your stewardship gift as a blessing for the work we are doing and the work that still needs to be done to sustain and grow our St. John's community.

We leave you with this quote from 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
6:30PM

Evening Prayer

FACEBOOK LIVE



SCAN THE QR CODE TO DONATE
TO OUR FOOD PANTRY

FALL TURKEY DRIVE



STJOHNSLA.ORG

GUEST PREACHER

THE REVEREND ANNE GARDNER



Recently Published!

And So I Walked

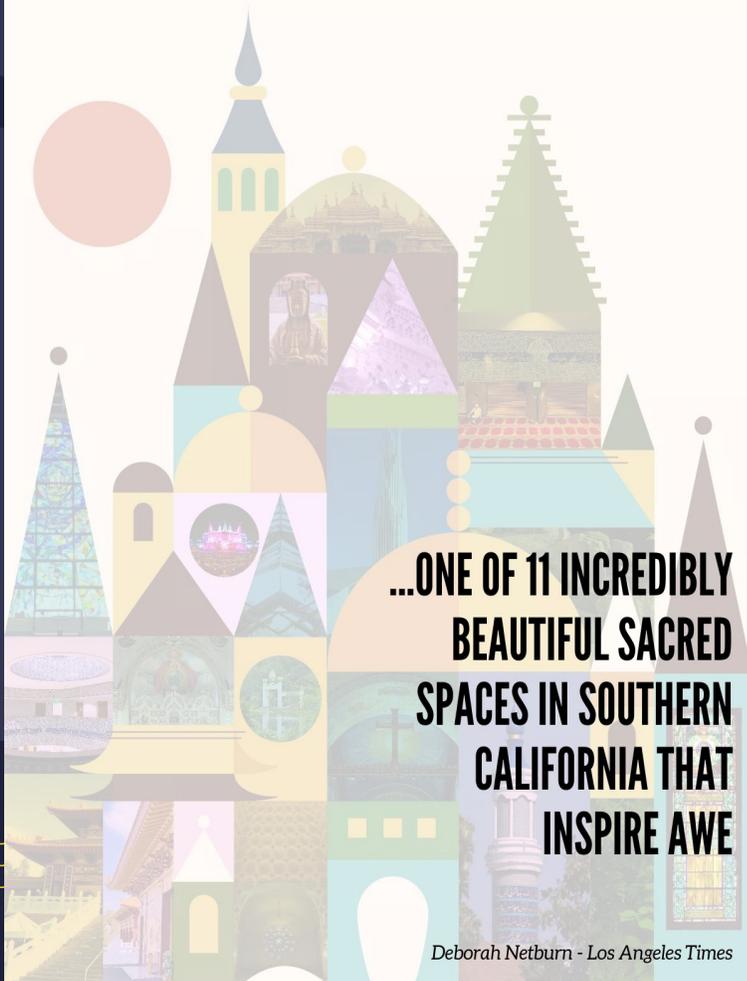
Adelaide Books (NY/Lisbon)

📅 12 November, 2023

🕒 8:00AM AND 10:00AM

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Deborah Netburn - Los Angeles Times