

THE EPISTLE

Saint James' Episcopal Church
Livingston, Alabama



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June 2015

This Month's Cover

Our cover picture this month is *St. John the Baptist In the Wilderness* by Sir Joshua Reynolds. There were a large number of Renaissance paintings and sculptures portraying John as a boy, but by the end of the 18th century the custom had passed. This 1776 Baroque painting by the great English portraitist is one of the few of that era. He probably undertook it because by that time he was widely noted for his portraits of children. It is oil on canvas, measuring 52"x40", and is displayed in the Wallace Gallery in London. It portrays John at about the age of 12 or 13, at about the same time that Jesus talked with the rabbis in the Temple in Jerusalem. John, although still a boy, is obviously proclaiming his message of preparing the way of the Lord. Beside him is a lamb emblematic of the Lamb of God (Jesus), and he bears the cross staff that is traditional in portrayals of John.

Joshua Reynolds was born in Plympton, Devon, in 1723, the son of an Anglican priest who was master of the local grammar school. His seven years older sister was Mary Palmer, the author of the then popular *Devonshire Dialogue*. She loved to draw, and she recognized his artistic talent very early. In 1740 she gave him £60, half the tuition, for him to study under the portraitist Thomas Hudson, and a few years later she paid for him to study in Italy. Jonathan Richardson's *An Essay In the Theory of Painting* (1715) had a tremendous influence on him, and he liberally annotated his copy of it. It was lost for 200 years,

but a few years ago it was discovered in a Cambridge bookshop signed "J. Reynolds Pictor" (Latin for painter).

Reynolds went on to become the leading British portrait artist of the 18th century. He painted portraits of almost all the important British figures from the royal family on down, and also a number of leading colonial American figures, including Gilbert Stuart, who was George Washington's portraitist. While he did the portraits themselves, he often had his studio assistants or his better students paint the clothing and background. He also painted several religious paintings including *John the Baptist*. He dabbled in some landscape works, although these, as he was the first to admit, were not among his finest achievements. He was one of the earliest members of the Royal Society of Arts, he was one of the founders of the Society of Artists of Great Britain, and along with Thomas Gainsborough he founded the Royal Academy of Arts.

In 1789 Reynolds lost the sight of his left eye, which forced him into retirement. Two years later in 1791 James Boswell dedicated his *Life of Samuel Johnson* to him. Soon thereafter Reynolds developed a swelling over his eye. He was bled regularly (a common medical technique in those days), but his health continued to fail. He died in February of 1792 and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Richard R. Losch+

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A Word from the Editor

For centuries theologians and philosophers have considered the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Some jokester has suggested that knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit, and wisdom is knowing not to use it in a fruit salad. Wisdom, however, does not come from knowledge. It is a separate gift that, while it may work hand-in-hand with knowledge, does not require it. It is not necessary to know the scientific properties of a tomato to know that it should not be used in a fruit salad.

In the early 19th century in France, young Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney was almost expelled from his seminary because he was considered too stupid to be a priest. Due to his diligence and piety, however, they decided to let him finish his studies. In 1815 he was ordained a priest. He was assigned to one of the most insignificant churches in France, a tiny village called Ars, where they felt he could do no harm. The village was so small that when his bishop went to visit him he could not find it. When he finally got there he examined Vianney, and was astounded at his understanding of the Faith. When he asked where he had learned so much, Vianney pointed to his prayer desk. His reputation spread, and within a few years people from all over Europe, including many crowned heads, were journeying to Ars to be counseled by him. By 1855 over 20,000 pilgrims came to Ars every year, and Vianney spent 14 to 16 hours a day hearing confessions. He died in 1859, and in 1925 he was can-

onized a saint. He probably knew little of the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas and it is unlikely that he could discuss Systematic Theology, but his wisdom in spiritual matters was extraordinary. He is known as the Curé d'Ars, and is the patron saint of all priests.

To obtain knowledge requires intelligence, opportunity and a desire to learn, and these gifts are not given to everyone. Wisdom, on the other hand, is a gift of the Holy Spirit and is available to all—the high and low, the rich and poor, the bright and dull. In fact, great intellect sometimes gets in the way of wisdom. We all know some highly intelligent and knowledgeable people who are socially inept and make incredibly unwise decisions. We also all know simple and often uneducated people whose wisdom is daunting.

The Curé d'Ars attained his wisdom on his knees, and that is where we can attain ours. Wisdom, like all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is not simply handed to us. It is offered to us, and we must make an effort to receive it. That effort is exerted in prayer through a conscientious desire to achieve piety.

Arrogance usually destroys wisdom, so one of the prices of wisdom is humility. Humility is not thinking less of oneself, it is thinking of oneself less. It was the Curé d'Ars' concern for others and not for himself that was the fount of the wisdom that he achieved on his knees.

Father Rick Losch

Bishop Marray to Visit

The Right Reverend Santosh Marray, Assistant Bishop of Alabama, will visit St. James' on Sunday, June 21st. He will be the celebrant at Holy Communion and will administer the Sacrament of Holy Confirmation. The service will begin at 11:00 a.m. A catered parish luncheon will follow the service. So that we may prepare for seating and food, if you plan to attend the luncheon you are asked to sign up on the sheet in the parish house kitchen or to e-mail Hiram Patrenos at patrenoj@bellsouth.net no later than Sunday, June 14th!

Hiram Patrenos

No Evening Prayer and Supper in June

Because of the luncheon in honor of Bishop Marray, we will NOT have our monthly Evening Prayer and Parish Supper in June.

Hiram Patrenos

Coffee Hour Recess

With all of our summer activities, everyone is in a rush following services to get to lunch and/or their favorite activities. Therefore, beginning on Sunday, June 7th, our Coffee Hour will be on summer recess until the Sunday after Labor Day. We will plan to have refreshments when we host the Community 5th Sunday Service on August 30th.

Hiram Patrenos

The latest survey shows that three out of four people make up 75% of the population.

Parish Directory

We will be updating the Parish Directory during June and will publish the updated Directory as of July 1, 2015. Copies of the Parish Directory are available on the table in the Parish House. Please review it for any errors and/or omissions and give any additions or corrections in writing to Hiram Patrenos, or e-mail them to him at patrenoj@bellsouth.net.

Hiram Patrenos

Altar Flowers

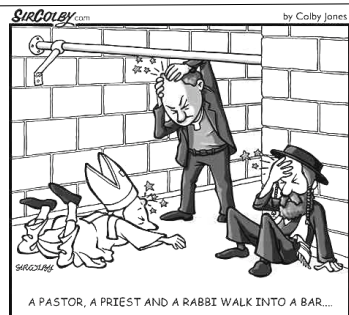
Volunteers are needed to provide Altar Flowers. A sign-up chart is located in the sacristy. You may use flowers from your yard or if you wish, make arrangements with a florist to provide them. For more information, please speak with Carolyn Patrenos.

Hiram Patrenos

Men's Breakfast Recess

Our monthly First Sunday Interfaith Men's Breakfasts will be on recess during the summer. We will resume on the second Sunday of September (because of the Labor Day weekend) at Saint James', and thereafter we will meet each first Sunday.

Richard R. Losch+



Be Wordly Wise

The Suffix -age

One of the most useful suffixes we have is *-age*, which comes to us directly from the French and can be attached to an amazing number of roots. It is difficult to define by itself. When attached to a root it denotes (1) an action or result of an action (wreckage); (2) a number or amount (milage, postage); or (3) a place or abode (village, parsonage).

In French it is pronounced like *ahzh*, while in English it is usually softened to something like *idge* (as in stoppage). One of the few words where we pronounce it like the French is *garage*, although in some dialects it is pronounced more like *ga'rridge*.

The suffix *-age* has nothing to do with age, although there are a couple of uses of it that are generally associated with age. To dote on something means to focus one's attention so narrowly on one thing that all else is ignored. One of the traits of senility is doting on one thing for a moment and then flitting to another, never seeing the connection of one to the other. This is called dotage, and we often hear the phrase "an old man in his dotage." The opposite is a trait of extremely juvenile immaturity, in which a person never focuses on anything long enough to see a sequential relationship. This is called nonage, and it produces the phrase "a young man of nonage." Although dotards are usually old and nonards young, in neither case does the suffix have any reference to age, and both words are pronounced with the accent on the first syllable.

The suffix is French, but it came there from Latin, which also used it frequently. Its earlier origin is unclear. For example, suffrage comes from the Latin noun *suffragium*, a vote. Garbage is a Middle English-Norman word, and the root *garb-* is unknown.

There is a huge number of English words that use this suffix, and it can be attached to countless other roots to create new words. A few examples are *garage* (French *garer*, to shelter), *homage* (Latin *homo*, man, referring to declaring oneself to be one's lord's "man"), *hostage* (Latin *hosticus*, belonging to the enemy), *village* (Latin *villa*, country house), *postage* (Middle French *poste*, mail), *percentage* (Latin *per centum*, through a hundred), *damage* (Latin *dammum*, loss or harm), *pillage* (Old French *pillar*, plunder), *coinage*, *wordage*, *spillage*, *tonnage*, *brokerage* and *wreckage*.

It can be amusing to create words using the suffix *-age*. Many common words today were created by imaginative writers of the past, and have become standard English words. Shakespeare created dozens of them. Consider creating some of your own, such as *bookage*, *costage* or *pennage*.

Richard R. Losch+

ECW Yard Sale

Thanks to all who contributed to the ECW Yard Sale, to the ladies who worked so hard on it, and to Hiram Patrenos and Earnest Dew for transporting the items. The sale brought in over \$750 for the ECW's charitable outreach. Well done!

Richard R. Losch+

The Peace of Jerusalem

King David conquered the Jebusite (Canaanite) city of Urusalim in 1000 BC (2 Sam. 5:6ff). He established it as his capital because it was not associated with the lands or traditions of any of the 12 Israelite tribes that he had caused to coalesce into the United Monarchy of Israel. It was right on the border that divided the tribes of Benjamin (Saul's tribe) and Judah (David's), and thus it was neutral ground, not being technically in either tribal territory. In the Canaanite language the name of the city, Urusalim, meant "Founded by Shalim," and probably referred to the original king of the ancient city-state. David Hebraicized the name of the city to Yerushalayim (ירושלים), which we have Anglicized to Jerusalem. *Yeru* means city, and *shalayim* derives from the Hebrew *shalom* (שלום), peace.¹ David's name for the city, then, means "City of Peace." In the past three millennia Jerusalem has been far from a city of peace. It is not to the peace of this world that the name refers, however, but to the peace of God. Since its inception Jerusalem has been the center of Judaism, and for 2000 years it has been the Holy City of Christianity.² It is the symbol of what Saint Paul called "the peace of God that passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7). The Church is called the New Jerusalem,

and the earliest English colonists in America sought to build a New Jerusalem, a "Shining City on a Hill" that would shine the Light of God to the whole world.

It is interesting to note that the root for *shalom*, s-l-m, is the same as the root of such Hebrew verbs as *lehashlim* (להשלים), to fulfill that which is lacking, and *leshalem* (לשלם), to make payment or to supply that which is owed. When the risen Christ greeted the Apostles he said, "Peace be with you" (*Shalom aleichem*, שלום עליכם). This phrase in Aramaic is exactly the same as in Hebrew, with the same roots,³ and he would have spoken to them in that language. When we consider the root, we realize that he was not only offering them peace as we usually think of it, but also the fulfillment of something lacking, and the payment of something owed. What they were lacking and what he owed, of course, was the fulfillment of his promise that he would give them the Holy Spirit to be with them after he left: "And Jesus said, 'Peace be with you.' ... And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (Jn. 20:21f). The promise of peace that was the old Jerusalem was now fulfilled in the Church, the New Jerusalem, the true City of Peace.

Richard R. Losch+

We hang petty thieves. The great ones we elect to public office. —Aesop

¹ Salem, the name of countless American cities and towns, is an Anglicization of Shalom.

² For over 1300 years it has been the third holiest city to Muslims, behind only Mecca and Medina in Arabia.

³ Although the New Testament was written in Greek, the language Jesus spoke was Aramaic, a Semitic language based on Hebrew. Aramaic is closer to Hebrew than Italian is to Latin.

Late Responses?

When the congregation participates in a portion of the service (such as the Creed, a psalm or the Lord's Prayer), some people, rather than starting at the beginning, seem to be joining in late. In fact, they are correct. From ancient times it has been the practice for the priest or leader to say the first phrase, then the congregation joins him at the next. For example, he says, "I believe in One God" and the people pick it up at "the Father Almighty"; or he says, "Our Father," and the people come in at "Who art in heaven." In a psalm said in unison, the leader says the first phrase and the people pick it up at the first break (such as a semicolon or the star that breaks a verse).

This originated in the time that most services were almost entirely sung, and a leader called a precentor¹ started first in order to set the key and tempo. In the Prayer Book, the only congregational prayer that is not set up for this is the Prayer of Humble Access ("We do not presume to come to this thy table . . ."), but only the priest, not the congregation, said it until the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Even though many services are now commonly said instead of sung, the practice of not joining in until after the leader has said the first phrase has endured to this day.

Richard R. Losch+

(Reprinted from the September 2014 *Epistle*)

I wonder if other dogs think poodles are members of a weird religious cult.

¹ From the Latin *praecentor*, "one who sings before."

Hear and Obey

In Hebrew there is no word for obedience. If it is said that someone hears, that means he obeys: "Hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem" (Is. 28:14); "Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah" (Jer. 22:2).

The New Testament was written in Greek, but since most of its writers spoke Aramaic² as their primary language they often used Hebrew idioms even though they were writing in Greek. Greek has a word for obedience (*hypekoe*, ὑπηκοή), but in the New Testament the expression "to hear" (*akoue*, ἀκούη) is often used in place of it: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:17).

We use similar idioms in English. To see means to understand, and to hear means to heed. When a mother says to her child, "Listen to me," she is implying attention and obedience, not simply hearing. There are very few who have been so blessed as to hear God speak to them in audible words. We are all capable of hearing him in our hearts and souls, however, and it is incumbent on us to listen—to pay attention, and to obey. "And he said unto them, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear'" (Mk. 4:9).

Richard R. Losch+

² Aramaic was the language of Galilee and Judea in New Testament times. It is a Semitic language based on Hebrew, but with a strong Syrian influence. It is written with the Hebrew alphabet. There are still a few tiny pockets of Aramaic-speaking peoples left in the Middle East, but ISIS is trying to exterminate them.

Jesus' House

Archaeologists in Nazareth have identified a first century house that could possibly have been the house where Jesus was raised. At least it is almost certainly similar to Jesus' childhood home, although for centuries pilgrims have believed that this was the actual location of the home of Joseph and Mary.

The house, which is partially carved out of a rocky hillside, is made of stone and mortar walls. During the era of the Ottoman Empire the house was unavailable to pilgrims, and in the course of time it was forgotten and buried. It was first discovered in 1880 by the nuns of the Sisters of Nazareth, but it was not until 2006 that archaeologists positively identified it as a first century house and as the place that for centuries had been revered as the actual home of the Holy Family.

After the Roman Empire became Christian in the 5th century, the power of the empire moved more and more to the East, to the emperor Constantine's capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul), originally known as Byzantium. The eastern Roman empire came to be known as the Byzantine Empire. It ruled Palestine until the end of the 7th century. The Byzantines believed that this house was the house where Jesus grew up. They decorated it with mosaics, and erected a church, the Church of the Nutrition, over the house, thus protecting it. After the fall of Palestine to the Muslim invaders the church and house fell into disrepair, and by the time the Crusaders captured it in the 12th cen-

tury it was in ruins. They restored it and established it as a pilgrimage site, but after their defeat it again fell into disrepair. Eventually it disappeared under the rubble until it was rediscovered in 1880.

The nature and location of the house make it as good a candidate as any for having been Jesus' home, but there is no way we can be sure. One factor, however, weighs in its favor. While the house would not have been considered of any importance during Jesus' lifetime, after his resurrection the places involved in his life would have been very important to his followers, and they would have remembered them. Jesus moved from Nazareth to Capernaum about three years before his death and resurrection, but in the early days of the Christian movement there were still many in Nazareth who would have known him and his family and would have remembered where they had lived. Saint Helena, the mother of Constantine, journeyed to Palestine in the 4th century to find the holy places. This was only 300 years after Jesus' time, and those oral traditions would have been fresh in the memories of his followers. It is very likely, therefore, that many of the places she identified were in fact the actual sites. This may be one of them.

Until recently there were very few first century archaeological finds in Nazareth, and most of them were tombs. However, in the last few years two houses have been found. One is the house we have discussed above, and the other is one found in 2009,

but for a number of reasons the latter is almost certainly not Jesus' house.

In 2006 the Sisters of Nazareth granted full access rights to the Nazareth Archaeological Project under the direction of Kenneth Dark of the University of Reading (U.K.). They have unearthed numerous relics including broken cooking pots, a spindle whorl (used in spinning thread), and several limestone vessels. These finds indicate that a family lived there, and since the vessels were limestone it is almost certain that it was a Jewish family¹. In the March/April 2015 *Biblical Archaeological Review* Dr. Dark wrote, "The structure included a series of rooms. One, with its doorway, survived to its full height. Another had a stairway rising adjacent to one of its walls. Just inside the surviving doorway, earlier excavations had revealed part of its original chalk floor." The house apparently was abandoned sometime in the first century. After that the area around it was used for quarrying, and a burial ground was established beside it. Two tombs, both now empty, are in the courtyard. Three centuries later the Byzantine Christians built the Church of the Nutrition on the site, thus preserving what was left of the house.

If that were indeed Jesus' house, it is not unreasonable that it was eventually abandoned. Jesus moved to Capernaum early in his ministry (Mt. 4:13). Joseph was undoubtedly dead

by that time, but Mary very likely remained in her home in Nazareth until after the resurrection, when she moved to Ephesus under the care of John the Apostle (Jn. 19:26). James the Brother of the Lord² was converted to Christianity after the resurrection, and became the first Bishop of Jerusalem, where he was martyred, so he would not have remained in Nazareth. In those days real estate was rarely sold and transferred from family to family as it is today, so the abandonment of the house is consistent with the conditions of the times.

Nazareth in Jesus' time was a tiny rather squalid village that was relatively isolated culturally from its surroundings ("Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"—Jn. 1:46). The Roman hold on Palestine was well established by the time Jesus was born, and Roman culture was exerting a strong influence on the more urbane Jews, just as the Greek culture had done three centuries earlier after Alexander's conquest. Just across the Nahar Zippori valley from Nazareth was the city of Sepphoris, which was being rebuilt as a Roman city with an amphitheater, baths, temples, and all the Roman amenities. Nazareth, on the other hand, was fiercely anti-Roman and held firmly to its ancient Jewish traditions. As a result the village was noted for the strength of its

² Whether this was Jesus' sibling, a cousin or a stepbrother has been argued for centuries, and will not be discussed here. From the earliest times, however, he has been referred to as James the Brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19) to distinguish him from the two Apostles James.

¹ Jews in the first century believed that limestone vessels could not become ritually impure, so they were by far the most commonly used. Gentiles used clay or wooden vessels.

Jewish identity. That rigidity may also have been the reason for their rejection of Jesus' teachings, which brought him to leave Nazareth and move to Capernaum (Mk. 6:4).

Archaeology, like history, cannot speak in absolutes. All we can do is find hard evidence, and from it draw reasonable conclusions. Modern scientific methods have enabled archaeologists not only to make astounding discoveries, but also to be much more secure in the conclusions they draw from them. Notwithstanding, many of those conclusions depend on reason, not on indisputable empirical evidence. Whether or not this really was the house of Jesus will be argued for years, and many reputable authorities have not yet even weighed in on the matter.

St. Thomas Aquinas said that the validity of relics is *ex parte videntium*, meaning that it depends on the viewer. If the pilgrim believes that the house really is Jesus' house, then for him it is. If not, then for him it is not. If it really matters whether or not Jesus physically touched those stones in his childhood, then they become magic talismans rather than a means of focusing our spirituality, and Christianity rejects magic. Believe as you will, but there is at least a reasonable possibility that we have found the actual house that Jesus grew up in.

Richard R. Losch+

If your religion tells you that God wants certain people dead and doesn't want to kill them himself, but will send you to heaven if you kill them for him, perhaps it's time for a serious re-examination of your religion.

Jesus the Carpenter

For at least 500 years Jesus and Joseph have been represented as carpenters, yet this might not have been the case. In the early 16th century William Tyndale published the first English translation of the Bible. Many translations followed that, but much of Tyndale's language was incorporated into later translations, including the King James Version a century later. There are only two references in the Bible to Jesus and Joseph having been carpenters: Mark 6:3, "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary?" and Mt. 13:55, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" For at least three centuries the term carpenter has very specifically referred to one who works with wood. Before that time it had the somewhat more general meaning of one who works with hard materials. That is the meaning of the Greek word that Tyndale translated as carpenter. That word is *tektonikos* (τεκτόνικος), builder with hard materials, which derives from *tekton* (τεκτων), hard substance.¹ In the ancient Greek usage the word more strongly implied stone rather than wood, although the latter could also be meant. In England in Tyndale's time wood was a more common material than stone for building houses and furniture, so it is reasonable that that would have come to mind in translating *tekton*. In Jesus' time in Nazareth, however, wood was a rare and precious commodity. A

¹ This is the root of the term tectonic plates, the great stone plates that move over the surface of the earth and form the continents.

carpenter might have been able to make a decent living in Jerusalem or one of the coastal cities, but not in Nazareth. A stonemason, on the other hand, not only could have made a living in Nazareth, but could have made a very good one working in the nearby city of Sepphoris, which in Jesus' youth was being rebuilt in stone as a Roman city. It is more likely, then, that Joseph and Jesus were stonemasons rather than woodworkers.

This is also consistent with other factors in Jesus' life. Sepphoris was about an hour's walk from Nazareth. This would have been a normal commute for a worker in those days. A Nazarite working in Sepphoris would not have left his son in the village with the women after he was old enough to travel with him. Until Jesus was old enough to apprentice with Joseph, he would have been left with other young boys in the synagogue in Sepphoris to be educated. The education available in Nazareth would have been pathetic, but Sepphoris had fine synagogues with well-educated rabbis. They would have been delighted to teach a bright, inquisitive and spiritual boy like Jesus. He also would have picked up a working knowledge of Latin and Greek in Sepphoris, as these were the main languages spoken there. When he was 12 and was taken to the synagogue in Jerusalem, the rabbis there were amazed at his understanding (Lk. 2:41ff). It was not a supernatural grasp of divine knowledge that amazed them, but the insights of a brilliant, well educated boy whom they would not have expected,

he being a Nazarite, to be well educated. The Bible is clear that he did not draw on his divine power during his earthly life to deal with situations like this (Phil. 2:6f), but used the powers that are available to any of us if we have sufficient faith (Mt. 17:20).

When he was about 13 Jesus would have started as an apprentice to Joseph. Even at that age his work would have been heavy, and by the time he was an adult working as a stonemason he would have developed great physical strength. He was 30 when he began his ministry, so he would have worked his trade for 17 years. Roman scourging was designed to tear the flesh from the bone, and it was accompanied by a great loss of blood. Few men survived it, but a very strong man could. For Jesus to have survived the scourging and then have been strong enough to carry his cross, even though he couldn't carry it all the way, he would have had to be very strong. Seventeen years as a stonemason would have made him so.

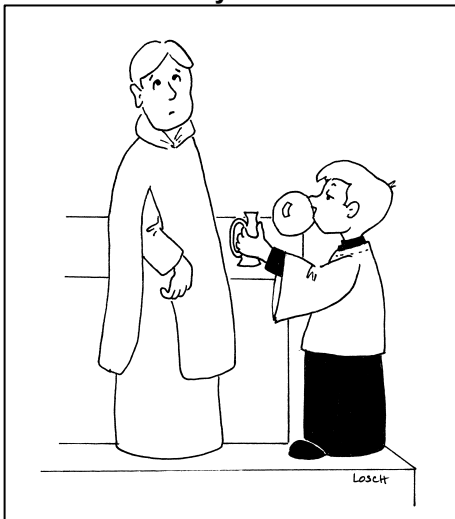
One of the great problems in any translation is that words often have subtle shades of meaning that are not found in their equivalents in the other language. Because of this there are often many fine differences of interpretation that simply cannot be resolved in a word-for-word translation. We may never know for sure what Jesus' trade was before he began his ministry, but it isn't really important. The tradition of his being a carpenter is strong and deeply rooted, and it will undoubtedly continue for centuries.

Richard R. Losch+



FLAG DAY
June 14, 2015

JAMIE by Richard R. Losch



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