



THE PAIDEIA LETTER

SPECIAL EDITION (October 2018)

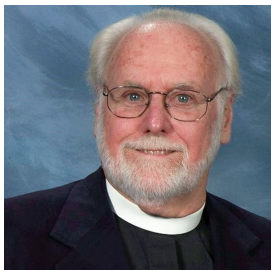
D. Bruce Lockerbie, Chairman/CEO/Editor

HALLOWE'EN: REDEEMING THE SACRED

This week Christians around the world will observe three important holy days, beginning Wednesday, October 31: **All Hallows' Eve** in preparation for **All Saints' Day** (November 1), commemorating apostles and martyrs, then **All Souls' Day** (November 2), honoring all the faithful departed. But most evangelicals will mark only one of the three—**Hallowe'en**—and for the wrong reasons.



In my Baptist childhood, I knew nothing about the Christian Year or the Church Calendar. We cared little about church history, our manner of worship was far from liturgical, and we deliberately avoided any resemblance to the often-derided “Modernist” denominations—or worse, the Roman Catholics—who seemed to put too much stock in saints’ days and their traditions. We routinely dismissed such practices. Between us and them, there was a gulf separating the historical end of *The Acts of the Apostles* and Martin Luther’s defiance, almost 1500 years later. Apparently nothing worth remembering had happened during the intervening centuries—or so our practice would seem to aver.



In fact, our version of the calendar showed only four days worthy of any special note for holy reasons—“Christmas Sunday,” “Palm Sunday,” “Good Friday,” and “Easter.” There were perhaps two others that **John Westerhoff III (photo left)** refers to as “**Hallmark holy-days,**” namely “Mother’s Day” and to a lesser extent “Father’s Day.” Then there were the semi-patriotic occasions: Thanksgiving and either July 1 as “Canada Day” or July 4 as “Independence Day.”



We took no notice of the full ecclesiastical seasons or weeks for Advent, then Christmastide followed by Easter, the celebration of the Ascension, then Pentecost singing “**The Twelve Days of Christmas**” without coincide with Mother’s Day, nobody mentioned the occupied with honoring mothers in our congregation.

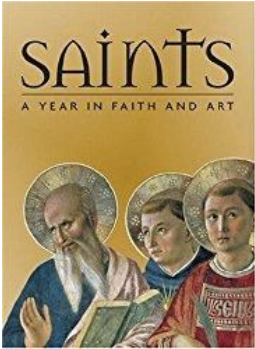
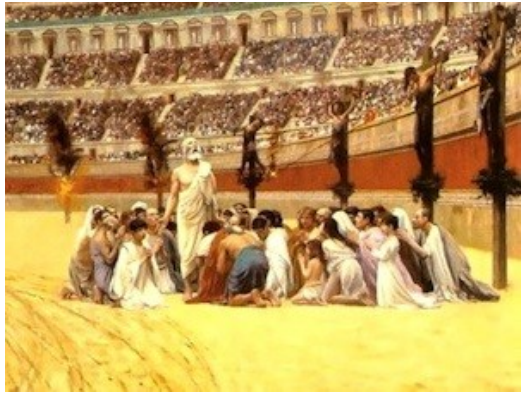


the special events commemorated therein: Four Epiphany and Lent leading to Passiontide, cost, and the renewed cycle each year. I grew ever knowing why. If Pentecost happened to arrival of the Holy Spirit because we were so

Of course we passed over those three days on which others chose to emphasize “**the communion of saints,**” meaning the unending relationship with those who have gone on before and “**entered into larger life.**” That’s because we either didn’t know the language of the **Apostles’ Creed** or **Nicene Creed**, or for theological differences we excluded them from our public worship. So whether by neglect or historical ignorance or theological dispute, we paid no attention to All Saints’ Day on November 1 or All Souls’ Day on November 2, just as we ignored any of the other feast days—except for October 31. We never missed celebrating Hallowe’en, but in the wrong context and by the wrong ritual. We spent the evening before All Saints Day trick-or-treating from house to house. But once again, we never knew why. It was just something we did, a custom borrowed from popular culture: Wear a silly costume and beg for candy door-to-door.

Now, it seems to me, we are receiving a severe penalty for our lack of diligence in paying closer heed to the history of our faith and the examples set by our forerunners. Somehow we have permitted October 31 to sink into the pagan frenzy

it has now become: A night intended for fasting and prayer in preparation to reflect upon the sacrifice of martyrs the following day has declined into far worse than trick-or-treat. Because we didn't respect a solemn occasion dedicated—as the hymn states—to **“all the saints who from their labors rest,”** we have contributed to the debasing of the days set aside for us to give thanks for the witness of the host of believers who have preceded us into Glory. Some of them died brutal deaths in the arena, some after unspeakable torture; others—very few—attained a fulfilled old age after taking the gospel to the farthest reaches of the known world.



We ought to know better. The author of *The Letter to the Hebrews* gives us, in Chapter 11, a model for listing and recalling such heroes of the faith and declares them to be among those **“of whom the world is not worthy.”** Yet too many evangelical Christians have never learned their names; too many have never read the numerous accounts of their testimony to rulers and princes and emperors, to senators in Rome, to barbarous tribal chiefs, to pagan priests; thus too many cannot find time to spend three days—October 31, November 1 and 2—giving thanks to God for their witness and sacrifice.

Instead we have bought into the Hallowe'en folklore of spirits and spiders, ghouls and ghosts that has grown up around the occasion; we have adopted the amusing act of disguising ourselves in costumes as if to hide ourselves from the imaginary wicked who seek to do us harm. We have taken a sacred date and blindly debased it, entering into its corrupted and now popular scary practices without so much as a prayer in recognition of and thanksgiving for its real meaning.



That real meaning has nothing to do with skulls or skeletons or hobgoblins or jack-o-lanterns from carved pumpkins. All these became identified as symbols of death—the popular misconception of what Hallowe'en is all about. Ironically, because of this distortion, secularists have now adopted October 31 as their special holiday, celebrating witchcraft and even going so far as to call it **“Devil's Night,”** to become notorious by acts of arson such as setting cars on fire and destroying property in the name of Satan.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO REDEEM AND RECLAIM SACRED MEMORY?

How can we help earnest Christians who not only ignore Hallowe'en as a holy day but also disparage all such dates as antithetical to our integrity as biblical believers? How can we urge many Christian schools which may properly forbid secular customs for celebrating Hallowe'en but also teach distorted lessons against observing the date altogether, only because they don't know its history, purpose, and traditions? How do we convince them that Hallowe'en is not a festival of fear and death; it is part of an event intended to recall the courage and exploits of faithful women and men, many of whom bravely suffered persecution and martyrdom for the sake of their faith and in the name of Jesus Christ.

We need pastors and elders in our churches who are more fully informed about the history of Christianity and without bias against pre-Reformation believers. We need heads of schools and board members and faculty who yearn for students to know truth in all its fullness, not just received opinion.

Nor should we limit our roster of to the apostles and Early Church martyrs. There are saints in every era and on every continent. The record has continued through the Middle Ages, through period of exploration and expanding world missions, through the horrors of 20th century totalitarianism—names such as John and Betty Stam and the Olympic champion runner Eric Liddell, each of whom died under orders from Chinese Communists; or Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Maximilian Kolbe and Edith Stein, each of whom died under Nazi oppression; or Simone Weil who chose to eat no more than prisoners in the concentration camps were being fed and so died of malnutrition in the cause of Christian righteousness; or the five American missionaries (including Jim Elliott) who attempted to evangelize the Auca tribe in Ecuador and lost their lives in 1956; and others such as Martin Luther King, Jr., who gave their lives in the racial struggle for human rights and God-ordained freedom in our own country.—as well as many others whose names are less or not at all well-known.



Fra Angelico “Forerunners of Christ with Saints and Martyrs” c. 1435



All Saints Church Window
Jensen Beach, FL



William How



Ralph Vaughan Williams

We need to redeem this sacred celebration in honor of those courageous believers by teaching our children and students the contribution of the martyrs to our Christian faith. We can begin by teaching them to sing Bishop William How's grand processional hymn to the melody composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams (selected stanzas below):

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress and their Might;
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well fought fight;
Thou in the darkness drear their one true light;

Alleluia, Alleluia!

For the Apostles' glorious company,
Who bearing forth the Cross o'er land and sea,
Shook all the mighty world, we sing to Thee:

Alleluia, Alleluia!

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

For Martyrs, who with rapture kindled eye,
Saw the bright crown descending from the sky,
And seeing, grasped it, Thee we glorify.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
And hearts are brave, again, and arms are strong.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

The golden evening brightens in the west;
Soon, soon to faithful warriors comes their rest;
Sweet is the calm of paradise the blessed.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;
The King of glory passes on His way.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son and Holy Ghost:

Alleluia, Alleluia!

D. Bruce Lockerbie, Chairman/CEO/Editor



LAST CALL FOR FEW REMAINING PLACES!

THE PAIDEIA CONFERENCE 2018: *WEEKEND DIALOGUE*

Thursday noon, November 29–Saturday noon, December 1
Washington, DC, and Greenbelt, Maryland

“The State of Bible Teaching in Our Schools—and What We Must Do About It!”

REGISTRATION FORM

RETURN THIS FORM PROMPTLY TO BE INCLUDED IN 50 PARTICIPANTS

COST: October 1 and after, \$550.00 per person. Registration includes all Conference sessions and materials; transportation to/from and admission to The Museum of the Bible; Thursday dinner, Friday lunch and dinner, Saturday breakfast, all refreshment breaks.

METHOD: By check payable to PAIDEIA, Inc.; by credit card link to 123 Signup at www.paideia-inc.com/events

Enclosed is a check for persons I am paying by credit card to 123 Signup

TRAVEL: If you are arriving by plane (DCA or BWI) or train (Amtrak/Union Station) or driving from a distance, you need to plan on arrival Wednesday afternoon/evening, November 28, for hotel check-in. Otherwise be at the Hilton Garden Inn, 7810 Walker Drive, Greenbelt, MD 20770 (across the parking lot from Lancaster Bible College/Capital Theological Seminary), by 12:00 noon on Thursday, November 29, to board the charter bus to The Museum of the Bible.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Each participant is responsible to make and pay for a hotel reservation by calling Cartina Bryant, Director of Sales, Hilton Garden Inn, Greenbelt, MD at 301-474-7400, Ext 3. Be sure to identify with THE PAIDEIA CONFERENCE 2018 for a corporate rate of \$145 per night.

NAME.....TITLE.....
NAME.....TITLE.....
SCHOOL.....
CITY.....STATE....ZIP.....
EMAIL CONTACT.....

Upon receiving your registration, advance readings will be sent to prepare you for full participation in the small-group and plenary forum discussion, debate, and dialogue.