

THE KEYS



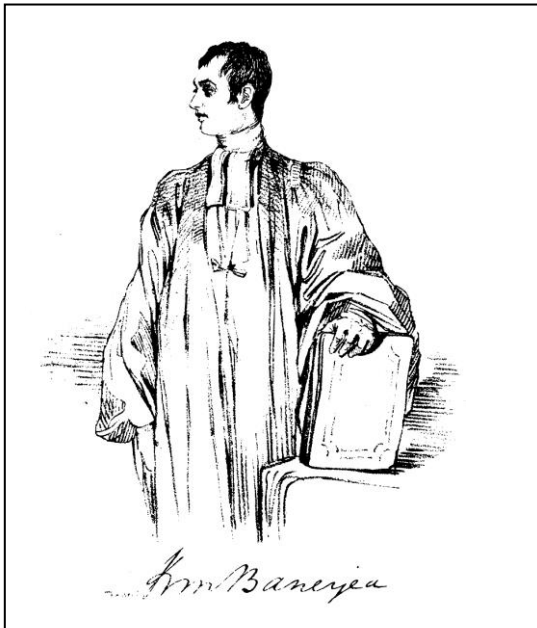
Church of St. Peter the Apostle
Anglican Catholic Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States
www.dmas-acc.org

The Rev. Peter Geromel OHI, Th.M, Rector
April 2022
<https://stpetersacc.org>

The Rector's Ramble (In and Out of Brambles)

Vedic and Yogic Hinduism

As we enter into Passiontide and Pascha (Easter), I would like to reflect on a couple of Hindus who converted to Christianity and the Anglican Way. Although setting up a dichotomy between “Vedic” and “Yogic” Hinduism is not, strictly speaking, a thing, yet I *do* want to make the *distinction*. Vedic Hinduism, for our purposes, is sacrificial. Yogic is, for our purposes, mystical. The Vedas are the early scriptural texts which set the stage for Hinduism. Yoga, comes from the word “Yoke” (English and Sanskrit are similar enough, since they both have the same Indo-European root, that this word is practically the same.) Yoga yokes the individual soul with the Universal Soul. There was a move away from Vedic, sacrificial, Hinduism, centuries ago, specifically in the Jain religion, with its principle “do no harm”. These Jain, for example, are the same monks who brush in front of themselves as they walk, so they don’t squash any bugs. Today, of course, the same sort of principle, we might say, is at work with those Westerners who convert to Asian religions, including Hinduism. They, quite often, don’t eat meat and the idea of the gods requiring sacrificial offerings, especially of meat, makes little sense to them – no matter how much it is a genuine part of early, Vedic, Hinduism.



Krishna Mohan Banerjee (1813-1885) was from an orthodox Brahmin family, baptized by a Scottish missionary, ordained a priest in the Anglican church, becoming a Canon of St. Paul’s Cathedral and an instructor for some significant time at Bishop’s College, in Calcutta. “He was also a fine Sanskrit scholar, and proposed in his writings an anticipatory role for the Vedas comparable to that of the Hebrew Scriptures.” He wrote, “The fundamental principles of Christian doctrine in relation to the salvation of the world find a remarkable counterpart in the Vedic principle of primitive Hinduism in relation to the destruction of sin, and the redemption of the sinner by the efficacy of Sacrifice . . .” Here we find a possible reason as to why those Westerners who convert to Hinduism find it hard to make sense of sacrifice, and to make use of it – they don’t believe that they are sinners, in contrast to how the noble pagans of old arguably felt. Canon Banerjee speaks of a conceptual Christ in Hinduism as “*Prajapati*, an appellation variously described as *Parusha* begotten in the beginning, as *Viswakarma* the creator of all, [who/which] singularly coincides with the meaning of the name and office of the historical reality of Jesus Christ, and that no other person than Jesus of Nazareth has ever appeared in the world

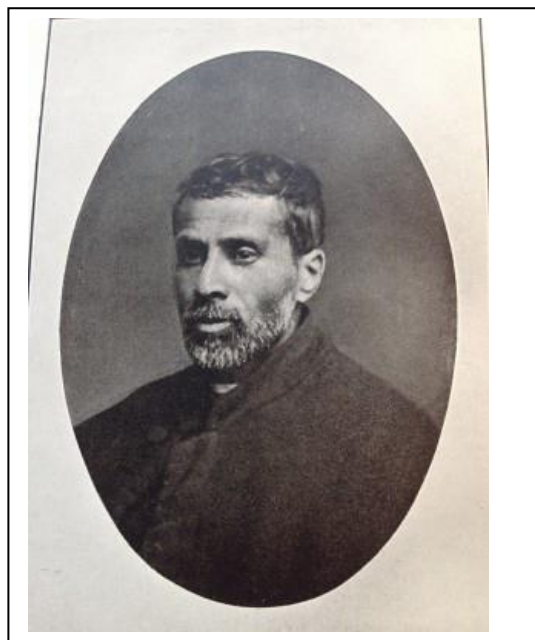
claiming the character and position of the self-sacrificing *Prajapati*, at the same time both mortal and immortal . . .”

He goes on, “It is remarkable that while the elementary articles are so much alike, there is no rival hierarchy in India to declare for the ideal of the Vedic *Prajapati*. The doctrine of a self-sacrificing Saviour, who by death overcame Death, appears to have vanished from the Sastras without a representative succession. Although we have millions of gods in the Hindu pantheon, yet we have none who proposes to be a substitute or successor of Him who offered Himself a sacrifice for the emancipation of mortals, and left the institution of sacrifice as a ‘figure’ of Himself. That doctrine has long become obsolete. The position of *Prajapati*, himself the priest and himself the victim, no member of that pantheon has dared to occupy. His throne is vacant, and his crown without an owner. No one can claim that crown and that throne in the hearts of Hindus who are true to the original teaching of the Vedas, so rightfully as the historical Jesus, who in name and character, as we have seen, closely resembles our primitive ‘*Prajapati*’.”

If I get his point correctly, the original character of the early forms of Vedic Hinduism required, explicitly or

implicitly, (I am not sure which), a saviour like our own. But it has filtered out of the system, as gods multiplied, and as people, I might conjecture, became further and further removed from the original religion of Adam (the father of us all) who worshipped the one true God and looked forward to a self-sacrificing deity. Despite the 19th century language, the importance of this message for us today shines through. Hinduism with integrity requires Jesus!

Another convert, Nilakantha Nehemiah Goreh SSJE (1825-1885), also from an orthodox Brahmin family and a later teacher at Bishop's College, Calcutta, who became an Anglo-Catholic member of the Society of St John the Evangelist, wrote: "In the eucharist, we behold the Lamb of God sacrificed for us once for all on Calvary, who comes we know not how, with His fresh wounds and with His precious Blood overflowing to drown and annihilate our sins therein, in His amazing love, to meet us, to be received by us, to dwell in us, yea, to unite us with Himself, and through Himself with the Father." In the Eucharist, beloved, I might add, the Vedic - sacrificial - and the Yogic - the mystical and unitive - become one. So Fr. Goreh continues, "May we, the sons of India, say that the unity with God, Whom our fathers delighted to call 'Sat Chit Ananda Brahman,' after which they ardently aspired, but in a wrong sense, for in that sense a creature can never be united with the Creator, yet after which they ardently aspired, God has granted us their children to realize in the right sense? Was that aspiration and longing, though misunderstood by them, a presentiment of the future Gift? I indeed have often delighted to think so."¹



I do not only say these things in the midst of Passiontide but in every season, for our continued education as, in the New River Valley, we hopefully continue to engage with people from various cultures, including the Indian or Hindu culture. In these ways, as educated Christians, we may dialogue with them, asking them questions, and answering their questions, showing Christ, the Saviour of all, to all.

News and Information

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2022

April 9th, Vigil of Palm Sunday, 5 pm Vespers and Mass

April 10th, **Palm Sunday**: 8 am Matins & Mass,

10 am Blessing of Palms, Procession, and Holy Eucharist

April 11th, Monday before Easter: Mass at 7 PM

April 12th, Tuesday before Easter: Noon Mass,

Stations of the Cross at 7 PM

April 13th, Wednesday before Easter: Noon Mass,

General Healing Service & Tenebrae at 7 PM

April 14th, **Maundy Thursday**: Festive Holy Eucharist, 6 PM, SEDER at Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, Watch Following

April 15th, **Good Friday**: Noon Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, etc. Confessions heard after 3 PM.

7 PM Evening Prayer, Liturgy of 7 Last Words, and Stations of the Cross

April 16th, **Holy Saturday**: Noon Ante-Communion.

Confessions heard after 1 PM. Vigil of Easter, 5 PM.

April 17th, **Easter**: 8 AM Matins & Mass, 10 AM Festive Holy Eucharist

April 18th, Easter Monday Mass - (Tentative) 7 PM

April 19th, Easter Tuesday Mass - (Tentatively) 12 Noon

¹ All quotes from *Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest for Holiness*

APRIL, 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
LEGEND: HC - Holy Communion; FHE – Festal Holy Eucharist; HE - Holy Eucharist; SS – Sunday School; PG - Prayer Group; EP – Evening Prayer; MP – Morning Prayer; P&HU – Prayers and Holy Unction					[1]	[2] 5:00 p.m. HC
[3] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS PASSION SUNDAY	[4]	[5]	[6] 7:00 p.m. HC 7:30 p.m. Vestry	[7] 12 noon HC	[8]	[9] 5:00 p.m. Vespers and HC
[10] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE PALM SUNDAY	[11] 7:00 p.m. HC MONDAY BEFORE EASTER	[12] 12 noon HC 7:00 p.m. Stations TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER	[13] 12 noon HC 7:00 p.m. Healing & Tenebrae WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER	[14] 6:00 p.m. FHE Seder, Watch MAUNDY THURSDAY	[15] 12 noon Mass of the Pre-sanctified 3:00 p.m. Confessions 7:00 p.m. EP, Liturgy, Stations GOOD FRIDAY	[16] 12 noon Ante-Communion 1:00 p.m. Confessions 5:00 p.m. Easter Vigil HOLY SATURDAY
[17] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. FHE EASTER SUNDAY	[18] 7:00 p.m. HC (tent.) EASTER MONDAY	[19] 12 noon HC (tent.) EASTER TUESDAY	[20]	[21] 12 noon HC	[22]	[23] 5:00 p.m. HC
[24] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS EASTER I	[25]	[26]	[27]	[28] 12 noon HC	[29]	[30] 5:00 p.m. HC

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

If you cannot fulfill your assigned duty because of an urgent reason, PLEASE SECURE A REPLACEMENT.

	April 3	April 10	April 17	April 24	May 1
Altar Guild	B. Higginbotham	V. Williams	M. Slayton	B. Higginbotham	V. Williams
	J. Butterfield	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham	J. Butterfield	B. Higginbotham
Coffee Hour	M. Slayton	J. Butterfield	G. Terrell	S. Darby	C. Pappas
Ushers	M. Slayton	G. Terrell	D. Drysdale	M. Slayton	G. Terrell
	G. Terrell	P. Pappas	M. Slayton	P. Pappas	M. Slayton
Sat. Epistoler 5 p.m.	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield
Epistoler 8 a.m.	A. Butterfield	C. Von Claparede	G. Mauney	D. Drysdale	G. Mauney
Epistoler 10 a.m.	C. Von Claparede	T. Paisley	T. Paisley	G. Terrell	P. Williams
Server	P. Williams	P. Williams	P. Williams	P. Williams	P. Williams
Crucifer	W. Paisley	W. Paisley	W. Paisley	W. Paisley	W. Paisley

2022 Vestry (term end): Dan Drysdale (‘23), Lisa Olver (‘24), Ted Paisley (‘24), Marnie Slayton (‘22), Clemens Von Claparede (‘22), Phil Williams (‘23)