

From the Pastor's Pen: The Hidden Kingdom

By Guest Columnist
Father Paul Yerger

"Once upon a time in a kingdom far away . . ."

How many fairy tales start something like this? Did you ever hear a fairy tale set in a democracy?

There is a part of us that yearns for a kingdom, because it yearns for a king, for someone strong and personal who is in charge and cares about us. When we grew older, perhaps we forgot about the kingdom. Perhaps it was replaced by a bureaucracy, where it seems that no one is in charge or cares. Perhaps it was replaced by a dictatorship, as we tried to be our own kings and found ourselves to be tyrants.

But there really is a Kingdom, because there really is a King. This Kingdom is not like any other, even in storybooks, although it is the story that all the good stories about good



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kings are trying to tell, from Cinderella to King Arthur to Tolkien. This Kingdom is so different from what we usually experience, that much of the Gospels are attempts to describe it. It is like a wedding or a banquet. It belongs to the poor, and the "poor in spirit." It is so wonderful that, if a person realized what it is, he would give up everything, even his eye or hand, for it. The understanding of this Kingdom is hidden from the "wise and prudent" but revealed to babes.

Where is this Kingdom? It is "not of this world," but neither is it far away or only in the future or the past. It is coming with power, and there will be a time when every knee shall bow to this King. But now it is "at hand," it is hidden in the world like yeast in a lump of dough, like a little seed which will become a great tree, like a treasure hidden in a field. For those who want it badly enough, it is already here; "the violent take it by force." It

is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Who is this King? He is the hidden King, who left His throne to find his Bride, us. He is the Universal King, the hero of all the cosmic tales, yet

He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant."

He became a specific man, Jesus, born of a specific woman, Mary, in a specific place, Judea, at a specific

time, the first century. He did this because we can only know and love specific persons, not ideas, and only a specific person can love and die. He is "touched with the feeling of our weakness, for He was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin." He is the Wounded Healer, the Lost King who returns, because, when He dies, it is our flawed selves that He takes down to death with Him, and our true selves that He raises resplendent from the tomb.

How can one find this Kingdom? It is found wherever its King is obeyed,

because He forces Himself on no one. He says that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He is in their midst, so His Church gathers to reveal His presence, beginning by pledging allegiance to His Kingdom: "Thy Kingdom come. . ." The Kingdom is not limited to the visible Church, and we shall know it more perfectly later; but the most reliable and trustworthy place to find the real King is among His chosen witnesses, to whom He promised that His Spirit will teach all things.

But the door, the ladder, to this Kingdom, is in our hearts, because it is in our hearts that the King must reign. We must turn away from this world, with its cares and pride and emptiness, from our own flawed selves with our pretenses and excuses and delusion, and go into our "inner room," which is our heart. There we will find the King who has been waiting to meet us, to whom we can say, with the thief who hung beside Him, "Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Father Paul is Pastor of Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church in Clinton.

Entergy Mississippi, Inc. installing new advanced meters

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In early 2019, Entergy Mississippi, Inc. will take yet another step toward building a smarter energy future for its customers when it begins installing advanced electric meters in its service area.

Once complete, customers will have improved outage restoration, money-saving tools and better customer service. The multi-year project, approved by the Mississippi Public Service Commission, should be finished in 2021.

Over the past two years, Entergy Mississippi has designed and begun building the communications network and IT systems that will support advanced meters for homes and busi-

nesses.

"These meters are the foundation for grid modernization technologies," said Haley Fisackerly, Entergy Mississippi president and CEO. "They will offer many benefits to our customers, which is why the MPSC approved our plan."

Benefits of advanced meters include:

- New online tools to help customers better understand and manage energy usage. This can lead to reduced energy usage and lower bills.
- The ability to review energy usage daily instead of monthly. Using online tools, customers can view their energy use daily, in fifteen-minute increments.

- Improved customer service. With better information, Entergy Mississippi can better answer customers' billing and service questions.
- Faster restoration. The company will have a clearer real-time picture of how the power grid is operating, and can better identify outages. This will allow crews to arrive on the scene faster to make repairs.

Advanced metering is digital technology that enables secure two-way communication between the customer and Entergy. Each meter has a network radio. The radio transmits meter readings to an access point on an electric pole near the meter. This data is then transmitted to the utility through a secure

cellular network. With an advanced meter, customers can access their online account to view daily energy use, displayed in fifteen-minute increments. Energy use information is updated to the online account every four to five hours. Advanced metering also offers the potential for new programs that can help further reduce customers' energy usage and better support environmentally sustainable communities.

Customers will receive more information about their electric meter upgrade about three months before their scheduled installation. To learn more about the company's vision for a smarter energy future and view the installation schedule, visit energyfuturemississippi.com.

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