

Epistle to the Ostensible Church

Scott Cairns

Your fond Isaak, latecomer to the slog,
sometime schmoozer among the blathering
heretics, if lately a little bit
judgy, a little peeved concerning the blithe,
ubiquitous, and widespread ignorance
tolerated among slacker Xians,
whose glib disdain for their own history,
whose disinterest in pursuing much
if any progress along that ancient
path leaves me blinking, open mouthed—and, yes,
increasingly cranky—as each week brings
yet another earnest attempt to re-
invent the wheel, or to send it rolling
to the ditch. Peace. I write to all y'all
hunkered within your separate enclaves
to puzzle out why your neatly pared-down
faith so seldom satisfies the vacuum
of your God-obsessive appetite. Peace.
That we are all adopted, appallingly
co-opted into Christ's holiness is
a simple given, and a certainty.
So relax. His good pleasure will surely
accommodate at some future end time
our patent sloth and habitual dim-
wittedness. Meantime, have a stretch. The faith
you hope to grasp is not so much a grip
of propositions, and most surely not
that queer array of anxious codes with which
you have replaced the parabolic puzzle
that the fathers taught; such reductions keep
the body blind, mostly deaf, forever
not just a little dumb. Suppose a more
efficacious grip would come of lifting
your hand to take the cup—with fear and faith
and love—to part your lips, receiving what
is borne upon the spoon. The cup is not
so much a good idea as it is
your very life, one portion poured into
your hungry gut, the animating spirit
joined unto an elemental, and a bright
result, joining your sad persons to one
trembling joy investing all and everything
with theanthropic agency. Remember
to love one another, and please forgive
your cranky Isaak, whose love for you may
yet prove—please, O God—incorruptible.