

The Blessing of the Bicycles

*Wherever two or three speeds are gathered in my name,
there shall I be also*



Feast Day of Saint Dunstan
Saturday May 18, 2019
Red Wing, Minnesota

The Blessing of the Bicycles

By the Quicker Vicar, Matthew Cole

Collect & Blessing

Vicar: Dearly beloved, I humbly pray and beseech you as many as are here present to accompany me with a glorious thirst and some ready cash unto the taverns of Wisconsin and grant further that we may hereafter lead a goodly, riotous and inebriate life to the glory of thy most perfect ride.

Congregation: Hear, hear!

Vicar: Remember Lord, that many of our bicycles have risen from the dead, much like yourself. Bless these our bikes, let not our hubs spew forth their gears, protect and shield our tyres from punctures, save our thighs from unquenchable fire on the Maiden Rock Hill, and though we are not worthy, in thy mercy protect us from undue headwinds. This we ask not for others' sake but for ourselves.

Congregation: Amen!

Vicar: Remember that thou art rust and to rust thou shalt return.
(Vicar sprinkles congregation with water from the Holy Water Bottle)

All: Amen!

The Reading (*Adapted from Shakespeare's Henry V*)

Vicar: O that we now had here
But one ten thousand of those men in England
To ride with us to-day!

Noel: What's he that wishes so?
My clergy The Vicar? No, my fair priest
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
No, wish not a man from England.
Rather proclaim it, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this ride,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
We would not ride in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to ride with us.
Tomorrow is call'd the feast of Dunstan.
He that outlives that day, and comes safe home,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Dunstan's.'
Then will he raise his leg and show his scars,
And say 'These wounds I had on Dunstan's day.'
And he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. Then shall the names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words-
Maiden Rock Hill, Bay City Plummet,
Sturmev and Archer, Raleigh and Dunelt-
Be in their flowing cups freshly rememb'red.
And Saint Dunstan's Day shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he today that rides his steed with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;

All: And cyclists everywhere now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That rode with us upon Saint Dunstan's day.

Vicar: Here endeth the reading

Congregation: Thank God!

The Hymn

Amazing Gears

New Britain

from the Virginia Harmony, 1831

A - maz - ing — Gears, how sweet the sound as
As we ride — up Bay Ci - ty Hill, as -
Help us O — Lord to be - come good. But -

they tick a - long in third; And it is just a - bout the
cend - ing — Lord, t'ward thee; We wish that we all had more
please Lord not too soon. There's man - y a — bar 'fore

sweet - est - sound that I have ev - er heard.
low - wer — gears than just these blood - y three,
Wa - ba - sha, and cock - tails start at noon!

The Psalm

Adapted from King James Bible, 23rd Psalm

Please read responsively

Vicar: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Congregation: He maketh me to lie down at lunchtime:
he leadeth me beside back waters.

Vicar: He restoreth my bike:

Congregation: he leadeth me in the bikepaths of righteousness for his name's
sake.

Vicar: Yea, though I ride through the valley of the Mississippi,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;

Congregation: thy rod brakes and thy Dynohub™ they comfort me.

Vicar: Thou preparest a table before me in the Eagle's Nest
Coffeeshop:
thou anointest my chain with oil;

Congregation: now my chaincase runneth over.

Vicar: Surely goodness and Sturmeys
shall follow me all the days of my life:

Congregation: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever

Dismissal

Vicar: Lord, teach thy ways unto the wicked:

Congregation: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.
(Psalm 51 if you squint a bit)

Vicar: I lift up mine eyes unto the hills;

Congregation: from whence cometh my help?
(Psalm 121)

Vicar: Make straight roads for our feet,

Congregation: so that the feeble may not be turned out of the way, but may be made strong.
(Hebrews 12:13)

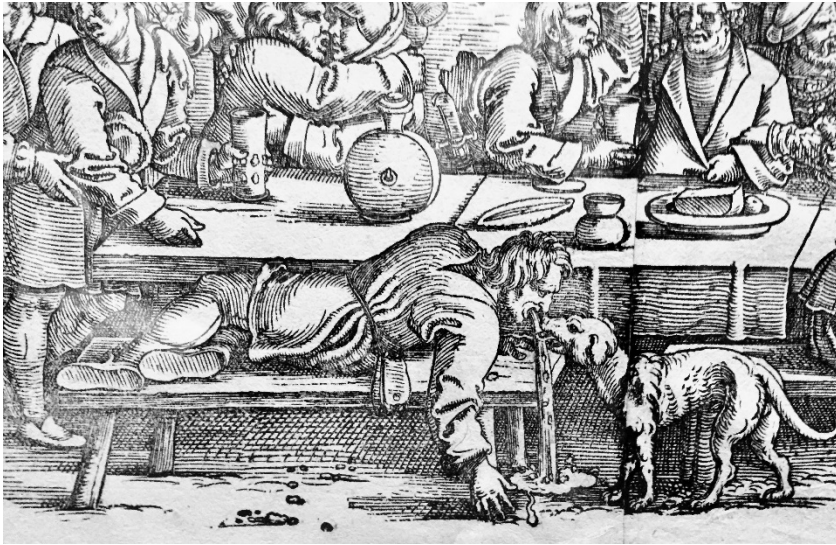
Vicar: Remember that life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of others, so be swift to love, make haste to be kind and go forth and ride with joy.

All: RAmen

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Service adapted by Matthew Cole, the Quicker Vicar, 2019.

What Would Jesus Ride?



A snippet of a medieval German woodcut (c. 1540) displayed in the Martin Luther exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Art in early 2017.

Dogs haven't changed much. Men either

The Feast of the Ascension celebrates the day the newly-revived Jesus ascended into heaven, and has been celebrated since the 4th century. It's supposed to be celebrated on Thursday but many churches have quietly moved it to Sunday so people will show up. In England it was common to 'beat the bounds', where the congregation would walk around the parish boundaries and marking boundary stones with chalk and hitting them with sticks. We could use our pumps! In some parishes, it was traditional to hit the young boys of the parish rather than the stones. It was important to know the parish boundaries because churches had certain duties like caring for children born out of wedlock in the parish. In Florence they have more fun; they have a dove slide down a string from the high altar of the cathedral to ignite a large decorative container filled with fireworks in front of the main entrance. This sounds like some kick-ass church! I am having ideas for next year!