This paper written by Jonathan Daniels was read by the Reverend William J. Wolf, Th.D., at the Funeral Service on Tuesday, August 24, 1965, at St. James' Episcopal Church, Keene, New Hampshire.

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After Jonathan Daniels and Judith Upham returned for the first time from Selma they asked and received permission from the faculty at the Episcopal Theological School to return to Selma in a continuing ministry of reconciliation and to try to keep up their studies as regular students. A number of times Jon discussed with his teachers in theology the questions for which he was seeking answers in a paper he proposed to write on the meaning of Christ's atonement. He said he wanted to analyze why some civil rights workers were so self-righteous, why in the strategy of non-violence many were led to say they loved their persecutors when they felt deep hostility toward them, how mixed motivations could possibly be related to that act of perfect love in which Christ on the Cross gave himself for all men. The answers that Jonathan found in his ministry are set forth in this highly personal paper which he handed in on June 22. His writing illuminates his Christian martyrdom more honestly and realistically than any comment by another person. The document has been altered only slightly and then to make certain references clear.

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Many times since my reconversion three years ago I have been asked (with varying degrees of outrage and pain), "Why?" I have found that the best way to answer has been to tell a story, to sing a "song of myself," which, like that of the singer, finally modulated to the Song of Songs: the Eternal Word of God. Intellectual history had to wait for flesh to tell its tale. That in itself was a great lesson for me.

Before I left for Selma the second time, a kind friend asked me someday to "theologize my experience in Selma." At the time the phrase meant something to me: *self-righteousness*, though I had yet to learn that. I was, of course, delighted. Since then a kind of song has sung itself in Selma (and in Cambridge), as a consequence of which the phrase now seems unmanageably abstract. I shall therefore sing the song instead, a few bars of it — and hope the Truth will out.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of March eighth, I dashed into the T.V. room of the Episcopal Theological School for an Executive Committee meeting. As I grabbed a cup of coffee and found a seat, I had just time to overhear one of the brethren say that his wife planned to fly down before the chairman called the meeting to order. At some point on the agenda past yawning, the brother whose wife was flying was encouraged to make his pitch. There was trouble in Selma, as we all knew from Huntley-Brinkley, and Dr. King had asked for northern volunteers. *That* was where his wife was flying, and he was trying to raise money for her travel expenses. A strategy was speedily devised for that purpose, and as we went our several ways there was excited talk about the possibility of sending other members of the community. . . .

I raced back to Lawrence Hall, flew up the three flights, and hurled myself into the room of a friend. The friend had been asleep, but graciously composed himself for what was visibly my latest insanity. I delicately reminded him that he had invited me to go south with him over the spring holidays (to talk with Bishop Allin of Mississippi and others) and suggested that we go *now*. My friend was not free to go, and I went off to study, a little disconsolate. From time to time I mused: could I spare the time? Did I want to spare the time? Did He want. . . . Reluctantly I admitted to myself that the idea was impractical, and, with a faintly tarnished feeling, I tucked in an envelope my contribution to the proposed "Selma fund."

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"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. . . ." I had come to Evening Prayer as usual that evening, and as usual I was singing the *Magnificat* with the special love and reverence I have always felt for Mary's glad song. "He hath showed strength with his arm. . . ." As the lovely hymn of the God-bearer continued, I found myself peculiarly alert, suddenly straining toward the decisive, luminous, Spirit-filled "moment" that would, in retrospect, remind me of others — particularly of one at Easter three years ago. Then it came. "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things. . . ." I knew then that I must go to Selma. The Virgin's song was to grow more and more dear in the weeks ahead. . . .

After a week-long, rain-soaked vigil at the "Berlin Wall," we still stood face to face with the Selma police, who were flanked by the sheriff's posse and backed by five or six ranks of state police. The President had not yet addressed the nation, and we were not a foot nearer the Dallas County Courthouse. I stood, for a change, in the front rank, ankle-deep in an enormous puddle flooding one side of the street. To my immediate right were high school students, for the most part, and further to the right were a swarm of clergymen. My end of the line surged forward at one point, led by a militant Episcopal priest whose temper (as usual) was at combustion-point. Thus I found myself only inches from a young policeman. The air crackled with tension and frustration and open hostility. Emma Jean, a sophomore in the Negro high school, who had been standing next to me before the line moved forward, called my name from behind. I reached back for her hand to bring her up to the front rank, but she did not see. Again she called, a note of growing concern in her voice, and asked me to come back before I got hurt. My determination had become infectiously savage, and I insisted that she come forward — I would not retreat! Again I reached for her hand, this time successfully, and pulled her forward. The young policeman spoke: "You're dragging her through the puddle. You ought to be ashamed for treating a girl like that." Flushing — I had forgotten the puddle — I snarled something at him about whose-fault-it-really-was, that managed to be both defensive and selfrighteous. We matched baleful glances and then both looked away. And then came a moment of shattering internal quiet, in which

I felt shame, indeed, and a kind of reluctant love for the young policeman. I apologized to Emma Jean. And then it occurred to me to apologize to *him* and to thank him. Though he looked away in contempt — I was not altogether sure I blamed him — I had received a blessing I would not forget. Before long the kids were singing "I love ——————," filling in with the badge numbers of the policemen standing in front of us. The young policeman had apparently forgotten his badge, so one of my friends asked another for his name. His name was Charlie, which for some reason (Steinbeck, perhaps!) endeared him to me all the more. When we sang for him, he blushed and then smiled in a truly sacramental mixture of embarrassment and pleasure and shyness. Soon the policeman looked relaxed, we all lit cigarettes (in a couple of instances, from a common match), and small groups of kids and policemen clustered to joke or talk cautiously about the situation. It was thus a shock later to look across the rank at the clergymen and their opposites, who glared across a still unbroken "Wall" in what appeared to be silent hatred. Had I been freely arranging the order for Evening Prayer that night, I think I might have followed the General Confession directly with the General Thanksgiving — or perhaps the *Te Deum*.

I was prepared for a tiresome crop of sermons as I entered St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Selma on Good Friday for the interdenominational "Seven Last Words." Most were as bad, in fact, as I had expected. One, on the other hand, was unforgettable. Dr. Newton, the pastor of the largest Presbyterian Church in Selma, himself an integrationist, preached about the word, "I thirst." The point of his meditation was that Jesus had had the humility and the freedom to ask for water *from His enemies*.

We were made to sit in our pew at the rear of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Selma on Easter Sunday (yards from the nearest communicants) until everybody else had communicated and returned to their seats. When finally we were allowed to approach the altar, the looks and gestures of hostility we encountered on the way were palpable. Though I had tried to make careful and foresighted preparation, I found myself falling prey to the reigning dynamics. Then it occurred to me that if I could not go to the altar in genuine charity, in chaste compassion, then I would go only to my peril. For by my very presence I had assumed responsibility for "the weaker breth-

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ren." I had heard — and probably made — scornful remarks about the "validity" of *any* celebration at St. Paul's. Now "validity" was an existential and decisive question: but the validity in question was entirely my own. I could not make my communion without sorrow under the circumstances. But I had begun to taste joy and perhaps the triumph of the Cross.

The night before Judy Upham, my fellow student from the Episcopal Theological School, and I left for the North we were the dinner guests of the priests and brothers at the Edmundite (Negro) mission. After dinner we withdrew with Fr. Ouellet, the pastor, to his living room. Our friend began to talk deeply and openly of his experience and of his life in Selma in particular. We were stunned at the honesty, the integrity, and the beauty of this saintly man. Though he graciously provided opportunities for us to talk, to share with him our concerns and beliefs and observations, it became increasingly clear to us that we could have little to say to the pain and the quiet glory of that life except that we revered and loved him. He said that after twelve years in Selma, he had finally stopped hating. Perhaps it was merely because he was nearing forty . . . but his bitterness had gone. Though (as a "white nigger") he had been repeatedly rebuffed by the white Protestant clergymen in town (and, presumably by the pastor of the white Catholic Church, as well, though Fr. Ouellet himself is white), he thought it was time to try again to establish some sort of relationship with them all.

Fr. Ouellet said at some point early in the evening that he had discovered what the ecumenical movement was all about when he had begun to notice our faces in the congregation at Mass each Sunday (we had gotten into the habit of picking up the kids in the Negro family with whom we stayed after early Communion at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and taking them out to St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Church). As we knelt for his blessing before we left and he placed his hands on our heads, we knew that, from almost any perspective, a miracle had occurred.

As we packed the car our last day in Selma to return to seminary, my eye caught a number of times on the Alabama license tag. Each time, it occurred to me that — at some point on our route — it might be expedient to dig out Judy's Massachusetts plates. Yet I could not bring myself to remove the

blue-and-orange tag which, in an ambivalent fashion, I had come to love. It may have been only that my first memories are of the towns in Kentucky and Arkansas where my family lived during World War II, and the fact that I had been graduated from a college in Virginia. At any rate, I could not remove the tag.

When we left Washington on the Baltimore Belt, an attractive Negro couple in a glistening new black Chevy pulled out behind us and shot by. As they passed, they both turned and stared. I nodded to them and tried to return their gaze. But instead I found myself flushing under their cool stare, and I quickly looked away. In their eyes, my identity was painfully clear. I wanted to shout to them, "No, No! I'm *not* an Alabama white. I'm on *your* side." We rode for a few miles in deeply troubled silence. There were no words that could dispel the pain and the shame and the vicarious guilt we both felt. Then, gently, illumination came. Of course, I could not shout, "No, no . . ." That would be cheap, cutting a knot that, in the ambiguous conditions of fallen creation, is far too sacred for minor surgery. To be a Christian, to be baptized into the Death-and-Life of the Cross, is not that simple. Whether we had known it or not, whether we liked it or not, whether it made any difference or not, we were *in His Name* and *for His sake* on the Baltimore Beltway, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in Keene, New Hampshire with "the Heart of Dixie" branded on our flesh and buried in our hearts. We were "standing in" for the rector at Selma and for the whole parish family at St. Paul's, for the white men of the black belt. Their guilt was ours, and ours, theirs. That was part of the covenant we had silently made with them when we had discovered that our "presence" in Selma meant listening and absorbing before it meant talking. We now knew that "chaste compassion" meant more than absorbing the suspicion and the fear and the hostility of our white brethren in Selma, though all that was part of the Covenant, part of the price a Yankee Christian had better be prepared to pay if he goes to the black belt. It meant absorbing their guilt as well and suffering the cost which they might not yet even know was there to be paid. If, in Selma, our baptism made us "white niggers" we now knew that it also made us "Alabama whites." I suspect that knowledge lies very close to the heart of the harsh tenderness of the Cross, the costly, puzzling, eucharistic glory of the Tree of Life. It is certainly part of what Christians mean by "Atonement."

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The discovery of all this has led to some unexpectedly beautiful moments. At the conclusion of my talk to the Churchwomen of my home parish in New Hampshire some weeks ago, a militant liberal expressed the wish that I would stop calling the parishioners of St. Paul's, Selma, "Christians" — "churchmen" would make her happier. Instinctively, I felt defensive for the people of my adopted "parish family," recalling the painful ambivalence and anguished perplexity I knew some of them were beginning (belatedly, it is true — for all of us) to feel. Then I recalled some of the self-righteous insanities I permitted myself to indulge in, early in my life in Selma. Before I delivered a gentle blast I could not help thanking Him for the gift of delicious irony. "He chasteneth whom He loveth."

It was my great privilege during graduation this spring to help host the family of a very dear friend from the deep South. For some reason, whether blessed or demonic I am still not entirely sure, they were bombarded by the language of civil rights, which seemed to be a theme in the week's festivities. During the sermon the afternoon before graduation — a particularly massive assault, it seemed — I became so uncomfortable for them that I stole to their pew to sit with them. I shall never forget the community which existed between us in that moment. The unspoken "wall" which had subtly divided us until then suddenly afforded a narrow path, and a thread of genuine affection ran through the fabric of our mutual disagreement and suspicion. Atonement is objective, indeed.

All of this is the raw material for living theology. And yet in as deep a sense, from my point of view, it is the *product* of living theology. The doctrines of the creeds, the enacted faith of the sacraments, were the essential precondition of the experience itself. The faith with which I went to Selma has not *changed:* it has grown. Darkening coals have kindled. Faith has taken wing and flown with a song in its wings. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. . . ."

I lost fear in the black belt when I began to know in my bones and sinews that I had truly been baptized into the Lord's Death and Resurrection, that in the only sense that really matters I am already dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God. I began to lose self-righteousness when I discovered the extent to which my behavior was motivated by wordly desires and by

the self-seeking messianism of Yankee deliverance! The point is simply, of course, that one's motives are usually mixed — and one had better know it. It occurred to me that though I was reasonably certain that I was in Selma because the Holy Spirit had sent me there, there nevertheless remained a fundamental distinction between my will and His. " . . . And *Holy* is His Name." I was reminded by the Eucharist, by the daily offices, by the words of confession, by the healing judgment of the Spirit, that I am called *first* to holiness. Every impulse, every motive, every will under heaven must attend first to that if it is to be healthy and free within the ambiguities and tilted structures of a truly fallen Creation. "*Worldly* holiness," a dear friend of mine would rightly insist: but the *holiness,* the "chaste compassion" of the One in Whom all life, all love, all truth are grounded. Of the ubiquitous Kingship of the eternal Word, through Whom all things were made, I found very real if ambiguous confirmation in that beloved community who ate and slept and cursed and prayed in the rain-soaked streets of the Negro "compound" that first week in Selma.

Another kind of organicity has dawned upon me more gradually. As Judy and I said the daily offices day by day, we became more and more aware of the living reality of the invisible "communion of saints" — of the beloved community in Cambridge who were saying the offices, too, and sending us carbon copies of their notes (and a thousand other things as well!), of the one gathered around a near-distant throne in Heaven — who blend with theirs our faltering songs of prayer and praise. With them, with black men and white men, with all of life, in Him Whose Name is above all the names the races and nations shout, whose Name is Itself the Song Which fulfills and "ends" all songs, we are indelibly, unspeakably *one.*

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