

April Agenda

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| Parish Clean-up Day | 4 April, 10am |
| Monday in Holy Week | 6 April, 7pm |
| Tuesday in Holy Week | 7 April, 7pm |
| Wednesday in Holy Week | 8 April, 7pm |
| Maundy Thursday | 9 April, 7pm |
| Good Friday | 10 April, noon - 3pm 7pm |
| Easter Vigil | Saturday, 11 April, 8pm |
| Wednesday Night at the Movies | Wednesday, 15 April, 7pm |
| S. Mark, Evangelist & Martyr | Saturday, 25 April, 10am |

New Brochure

A newly-revised color brochure is available in the back of the church, by the west doors, for use in advertising the parish. Please take one (or two) to pass on to a friend (or two).

Standing Notices

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Confession, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary.

Please call or e-mail the Church Office or the Rectory to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in hospital.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE PARISH IN YOUR WILL

The Anglican Church of
S. John the Baptist
PO Box 550
Marshall, VA 20116



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If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please email:

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ECCE

The Newsletter of S. John the Baptist Anglican Church
Marshall, Virginia
Issue 18 April 2009

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

As you read this newsletter, we have just entered into Passion-tide, the last two weeks of Lent before celebrating the central doctrine of our faith: Our Lord's resurrection. I pray that there will be many wanting to keep these last two weeks by coming out to the last Stations of the Cross as well as the services that count down Holy Week. Even if we have not done particularly well adhering to our Lenten rule, by observing Passion-tide, we can still gain a deeper appreciation of Our Lord's sacrificial offering of Himself for us, as well as His victory over sin and death.

The virtue of drinking in deeply at the liturgical well during Holy Week, is that each year we are presented with the opportunity to re-live the events that marked Our Lord's progress towards Calvary; each year we are presented with another opportunity to renew our faith in Our Lord. I fear for those who come to church on Palm Sunday and then fail to darken the door until Easter Day, as though nothing significant happened in between.

As we walk each day of Holy Week with Our Lord, we begin to recognize the choices we make everyday of our lives to either acknowledge Him as Lord or to reject Him as an embarrassment. When we are there at the Upper Room, as He institutes the Sacrament of the Mass and of the priesthood to carry on the Mass, as we stand with Him and His Blessed Mother at the foot of the Cross on Good Friday, we begin to appreciate what those first disciples experienced. Then when we gather around the New Fire of the Easter Vigil and share in the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures, the blessing of the baptismal font, the Litany of the Saints and the first Mass of Easter, we share the joy they felt and recognizing the Risen Lord in the "breaking of bread."

Please make the effort to walk with Our Lord this Holy Week. Not everyone can attend every service, but for those who do make the effort, your joy come Easter Day will be noticeable!

Affectionately, your Friend and Pastor,

From the Deacon's Dais

Last month I wrote that our conversation with others about God and His Church need not be sequestered to any place or time. This month I would like to expand on that idea.

In my home office I have two crucifixes; in my McLean office I have one. And when I recently set up a temporary shop in the Warrenton gaming center to trade stocks I needed two things on the wall to be at home: working market charts and a crucifix. Fortunately, I had a Russian Orthodox crucifix in a spare bedroom at home that I was able to bring into my 9'x10' Warrenton office.

One day as I was plucking away at my stocks a young couple came in to play Xbox 360 games. She happened to notice the crucifix on my office wall. An hour or so later, while he and I were engaged in the serious business of exchanging Space Marine playing pieces for Ork playing pieces, she said: "I noticed the crucifix in your office, have you been to Holy Trinity in Gainesville?"

What followed was a pleasant conversation about the new Roman Catholic church in Gainesville and its liturgy, summer camps for young Catholics, Eastern and Western crucifixes, and our shared experience with the one true living God. We did not delve into deep theological principals as I was too busy counting my Space Marines. This divine grace kept me from killing the conversation. Instead we shared a light talk that reflected our shared hold on the infinite depth of the catholic faith.

Does my "light talk" on an "infinite depth" sound a bit odd? Consider the crucifix. A thought, meditation, study

or prayer on the crucifix introduces the Christian to the infinite depths of the Faith. Yet we have all seen the road side tourist crucifix that borders (if not crosses into) the profane, as well as the simple or ornate crucifix that will stop us dead in our tracks and in our thoughts.

The simple but well done crucifix shows us Our Lord on the cross. One cannot overstate the difference between a cross *vacuus corpus*, and a crucifix *per corpus*. Our Lord defeated sin in his death on the cross and defeated death in his resurrection. The cross alone reminds us of death defeated by His resurrection. But, the crucifix reminds us of our own sin that necessitated the nailing of the Lamb of God to that cross. In our time on this world, while we face temptations and make decisions afforded to us by our God-given free will, which reminder do we need each day?

We clutch the cross, we kiss the cross, we lay our sins at the foot of the cross in thanksgiving for the salvation offered to us by our Lord who willingly put Himself on the cross. But in our day to day struggle with temptation, the crucifix looks back at us to remind us that our sin put Our Lord on the cross. This reminder becomes our armor to resist temptation and our example to fight back.

In conversation with other Christians, learned words are not needed when speaking of a shared deep love of God. When speaking in a secular context, it is like a clean air that fills the room. In the same way a crucifix will not be denied its influence on the space it occupies. It is the clean air that sustains a room.

The Rev'd Deacon John Needham

Transitus

No Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals were recorded in the Parish Register during the past month.

Kudos

To John Hagan for cleaning up the church grounds in advance of the parish clean-up day.
To J.T. McConnell for repairing once and for all the motion-sensitive light at the Annex door.

A Look at the Liturgy

As Holy Week is almost upon us, I thought it might be worthwhile reflecting on the various services that occur, starting with **Palm Sunday**. The close observer will realize that there are two "Masses" within the Palm Sunday liturgy; the first is centered around the triumphal entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem while the second centers around the Passion Gospel from S. Matthew. While properly not a Mass in the sacramental sense, the structure of the "Mass of the Palms" follows that of a traditional Mass, with an "Introit," Collect, Lesson, and Gospel. Then follows the Sanctus, Benedictus, and the blessing of the palms with five prayers, corresponding to the five prayers that make up the traditional Canon of the Mass. The palms are distributed from the altar rail and then a procession is formed. Going through the Annex, the procession moves to the church porch, where the crucifer knocks at the front door (symbolizing the gate of Jerusalem) with the base of the processional cross. At once, the hymn "All glory, laud and honour" is begun and the procession continues into the church until everyone is back in place. The Mass then begins and proceeds as usual until the Gospel. In its place the Passion is read, with the congregation holding their palms over their right shoulders. After the Passion, the deacon is blessed and returns to recite the final part of the Gospel, and the Mass proceeds as usual.

On Monday through Wednesday, Mass will be celebrated as usual, with the exception that at the Gospel, the Passion will again be read, Monday and Tuesday from S. Mark and Wednesday from S. Luke, the rest of the Mass proceeding as usual.

On **Maundy Thursday**, the Mass is again comprised of several different strands. We give thanks for the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and the Priesthood with white vestments and the singing of the *Gloria*, absent throughout all of Lent until tonight; even the bells are rung to emphasize our joy. The Gospel for the Mass commemorates the *Maundatum*, or "commandment" of Our Lord to love one another, and includes the washing of the Apostles' feet, a sign signifying them as priests of the New Covenant. The Mass proceeds as usual until the end when the Blessed Sacrament is translated to the Altar of Repose for the all-night vigil of prayer and meditation (following the example of Our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane), and to be brought back to the High Altar for the Good Friday Mass of the Pre-sanctified. Finally the altars are stripped, signifying the stripping of Our Lord before He was nailed to the Cross, during the recitation of Psalm 22. A sign-up sheet for the Altar of Repose will be

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9:30am

In April, we continue our examination of issues facing the contemporary Church. This class is strongly recommended for all who are new to the parish or who would not be prepared to "give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." *1 Peter 3:15*

Weekly Bible Study: Wed, 10:30am

Our Bible Study meets after Morning Prayer at 9:30am and Mass at 10am. Please join us for our study of S. John's Gospel and bring your friends.

Wednesday Night at the Movies:

On Wednesday 15 April we will meet at 7pm to watch and discuss the film, **Mostly Martha**. Here is the Netflix review: German director Sandra Nettelbeck whips up this tragicomic tale about an uptight professional chef who finds her world turned upside down when she takes in her newly orphaned niece, Lina (Maxime Foerste). Martina Gedeck stars as Martha, whose obsession with precision gourmet cooking extends to discussing recipes with her bewildered therapist (August Zirner) and verbally attacking anyone at the restaurant who attempts to send her food back.

Parish Clean-up Day:

Due to the weather on the previously scheduled clean-up day, we will meet on 4 April, after Morning Prayer to clean the grounds in advance of Easter. Please bring rakes and lots of energy! Coffee and snacks will be provided.

April 2009

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
|  PALM SUNDAY |  MAUNDY THURSDAY |  GOOD FRIDAY | 1 feria Bible Study 10:30 M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am E.P. 5.30pm | 2 S. Francis of Paula, C (feria) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 3  Seven Sorrows of Our Lady (feria) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm SOC 6.30 pm | 4 S. Isidore, BCD (feria) M.P. 9.30am Parish Clean Up E.P. 5.30pm |
| 5 ✠ Palm Sunday M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am | 6 Monday in Holy Week M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 7 Tuesday in Holy Week M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 8 Wednesday in Holy Week Bible Study 10:30 M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 9 ✠ Maundy Thursday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 10 ✠  Good Friday Three Hours Noon - 3.00pm Liturgy 7.00pm | 11 ✠ Holy Saturday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Vigil 8.00pm |
| 12 ✠ Easter Day M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am | 13 Easter Monday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 14 Easter Tuesday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm | 15 Easter Wednesday Bible Study 10:30 M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am E.P. 5.30pm WNM 7.00pm | 16 Easter Thursday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 17  Easter Friday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 18 Easter Saturday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm |
| 19 ✠ Low Sunday M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am | 20 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 21 S. Anselm, BCD M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 22 feria Bible Study 10:30 M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am E.P. 5.30pm | 23 S. George, M M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 24  S. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, M M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 25 ✠ S. Mark, Ev M M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am E.P. 5.30pm |
| 26 ✠ Easter II M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am | 27 S. Peter Canisius, CD M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 28 S. Paul of the Cross, C M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm | 29 Patronage of S. Joseph Bible Study 10:30 M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am E.P. 5.30pm | 30 S. Catherine of Siena, VD M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm |  THE EMPTY GRAVE |  THE RISEN CHRIST |

Ab=Abbot; Ap=Apostle; B=Bishop; C=Confessor; Dn=Deacon; D=Doctor; Ev=Evangelist; K=King; M=Martyr; P=Pope; Pr= Priest; Q=Queen; V=Virgin; W=Widow; SCF = School of Christian Formation; SOC = Stations of the Cross; WNM = Wednesday Night at the Movies

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found in the Annex. The time is divided up into hour intervals and you may feel free to sign up for several different time slots. I have always found that one hour goes very quickly in front of the Blessed Sacrament, as one might expect in such an intimate setting.

For **Good Friday**, the Three Hours will be kept from noon until 3pm, and will include Mattins, Stations of the Cross and Evensong, interspersed with meditations, prayers and hymns. This corresponds to the time that Our Lord hung upon the Cross until the moment He breathed His last and “gave up the ghost.”

In the evening, we will participate in the Good Friday Liturgy. The colour for the day is black as at a Requiem, signifying the death of Our Lord. The Sacred Ministers enter and immediately prostrate themselves before the empty altar. They rise and the Old Testament Lesson is read (a passage from the prophet Hosea who speaks of Israel being “raised up” after the third day), followed by the Epistle. The S. John Passion is read as in previous liturgies, followed by the Solemn Collects, a series of prayers for those both within and without the Church. The Cross is then unveiled and the faithful approach, genuflect and venerate with a kiss. Then follows a processsion to the Altar of Repose and the Blessed Sacrament is retrieved and brought to the High Altar, censed and elevated, and distributed to the faithful, in one kind only.

At the **Easter Vigil**, we are again introduced to various strands interwoven to teach us more fully about the great mystery of the Resurrection. The evening begins with violet vestments, as we are still in Lenten mode, recalling most recently the death of Our Lord on the Cross. The New Fire (symbolizing the radiance of the Risen Christ dispelling the darkness of sin and death) is kindled and blessed at the porch, and will be used to light the Paschal (*Pascha*, meaning “Passover”) Candle. The deacon takes a triple candle in procession up the

aisle singing three times, “The Light of Christ,” to which the congregation responds, “Thanks be to God,” while each separate wick of the triple candle is lighted. Upon reaching the front of the church, the *Exsultet*, or Easter proclamation, is sung during which the five nails (representing the five wounds of Our Lord) embedded with incense are affixed to the Paschal Candle. Four prophecies from the Hebrew Scriptures are read, pointing to the various aspects of the Paschal mysteries fulfilled in Christ, beginning with creation and including the Exodus and the entrance into the Promised Land. The procession then forms to move down to the baptismal font, which is then blessed using oils and the Paschal Candle. After this blessing, the congregation is then sprinkled, reminding them of their entrance into the death and resurrection of Christ through the waters of baptism. As the procession then returns to the front of the church, the Litany of the Saints is chanted. The altar is then stripped of the purple frontal and replaced with white, while the Sacred Ministers change into white vestments for the first Mass of Easter. There is no Introit to the Mass, and the bells are rung during the *Gloria* as they were at Maundy Thursday, signifying the return of joy. The statutes and icons, having been veiled in purple since Passion Sunday are uncovered. Before the Gospel, the celebrant chants the Alleluia three times, each time on a higher pitch, re-introducing it to the liturgy after its long absence, since Septuagesima. The Creed is not recited, nor the Agnus Dei, as this is the Mass unchanged from its most ancient form. Holy Communion is given to the people, who may receive it both to-night and again in the morning, as at Christmas. The Mass ends with an abbreviated sung Vespers, and the altar is censed during the Magnificat, as normal. The psalm, canticle and collect comprise a shortened first sung office of Easter.

Adapted from the Pascha Nostrum of the Church of the Resurrection, NYC