

February Agenda

8 February	Septuagesima with Blessing of Throats; ACW Meeting
11 February	Movie Night, 7pm: The Burmese Harp
25 February	Ash Wednesday: Masses Noon, 7pm
27 February	Stations of the Cross & Light Supper, 6:30pm

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



In this issue...

Deacon's Dais	ii
Kudos	ii
Transitus	ii
ACW News	iii
Ordo Kalendar	iv
Look at the Liturgy	v
Upcoming Events	v

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

Ecce@st-johnthebaptist.org

The Anglican Church
of
S. John the Baptist

4107 Winchester Road
P.O. Box 550
Marshall, VA
20116-0550

Office: 540.364.2554
Rectory: 540.253.5113

www.st-johnthebaptist.org

ECCE

The Newsletter of S. John the Baptist Anglican Church
Marshall, Virginia
Issue 16 February 2009

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

Over the past year or so, we have heard repeatedly the words "Hope," "Change" and "Yes, we can." These words portray a certain loftiness of purpose and suggest a progressive and attractive quality of human perseverance. Yet, taken at their deeper meaning, each word addresses an important spiritual issue.

"Hope" is one of the three theological virtues, along with "faith" and "charity," that forms Christian character. Hope, from a theological perspective, is placing one's trust in Our Lord's promises about the Kingdom of God and everlasting life, rather than relying on one's own virtues or abilities. With Christian hope, we recognize our own deficiencies and at the same time we see the need to be infused with the grace that comes from the Holy Ghost. When we practice the virtue of hope, we open the door to our dependence upon God's power, enabling us to share eventually in the fulness of His Kingdom. Hope leads to a sense of happiness as we anticipate our goal of union with God and also opens us up to others engaged in the same pilgrimage towards God.

"Change" is at the heart of the Christian message; not change that we can accomplish in our own strength but change that comes through *transformation*. In Christ, S. Paul tells us, we are a "new creation." We become mystically transformed as a result of the grace of the sacraments. The "old man" begins to die as the "new man" is born within us. In this sense, change is essential, for without our willingness to change, we will remain powerless in our struggle against "the world, the flesh and the devil."

"Yes, we can" became a national rallying cry, motivating individuals to join with others to enact change. From a Christian perspective, "yes we can" should remind us that we are not in this struggle alone; the Saints who have been tempted by the same things we are, who have met the same challenges we do, and have by God's grace triumphed, cheer us on. If we listen closely in our prayers, especially at Mass, we will hear them encouraging us to place our hope in Christ so that we will be changed into "new men," fit for the Kingdom of God.

Affectionately your Rector and friend,

From the Deacon's Dais

As most of you know, in need of a suntan, I drove 15 hours Northwest for a week in the balmy climes of Nashotah Wisconsin. My plans for a tan were dashed when temperatures reached 20F below, but the joy Michelle recognized in my voice during my calls home are best described by our Fr. Jonathan with: "Nashotah House has a warmth all her own."

At one point during my stay I viewed an extract from the twelfth century theologian Peter Abelard's *Sic et Non*. In this particular extract Abelard pushes the thesis: "By doubting we come to examine, and by examining we reach the truth." It is in one sense an echo of S. Paul's admonition to those that entered early Christian communities to be tested against accepted teachings. But in context it is a repetition of this admonition as applied to the teachings of the Church Fathers 1100 years into Christendom!

What a bold statement. Am I to read the Church Fathers as a Schoolmaster ready to judge their words from my learned seat? Abelard writes: "All writings belonging to this class are to be read with full freedom to criticize... But an explicit exception must be made in the case of the Old and New Testaments. In Scriptures, when anything strikes us as absurd, we may not say that the writer erred, but that the scribe made a blunder in copying the manuscripts, or that there is an error in interpretation, or that the passage is not understood."

Abelard is a Twelfth century theologian. And this is the

Kudos

To Larry Knutsen for his dedicated service as Senior Warden over the past several years.

To Arch Hoxton for his willingness to serve as new Senior Warden.

To Lionel Dickinson and Dean Worcester for their service to the parish as Vestry members.

To Richard Muller and Richard Parli for their willingness to serve on the Vestry.

rub. Look again at how he goes to lengths to separate Holy Scriptures from error. He is writing before the invention of the printing press, so his mention of 'writer error' means (slightly) more during his time. That is, while there was the inevitability for writer error in the copying of Holy Scriptures during this time, there was also the inevitability for writer error in the copying of the writings of the Church Fathers. So, why does Abelard take such pains with Scriptures and not the Fathers?

The answer would be obvious to the Twelfth century reader and it is only our modern detachment, stoked by the fires of Reformation thought, that give us any pause. You see, when Abelard's contemporaries read, "In Scriptures," they understood that to mean: In Scriptures, as understood and taught by the Church. If there was some absurdity, i.e. something contrary to the settled teaching of the Church, than it must be the error of the transcriber. The writings of the Church Fathers did not have this same foundation and thus, for Abelard, did not have the same protections from doubt.

A modern reader that does not grasp this misses the antithetical point of distinction between the Scriptures as understood and taught by the church and all else. We are blessed with the Holy Scriptures in our hands and in our language. But if we hold them and yet refuse to submit ourselves to the settled teachings of the Church of these same Scriptures, we are one more individual megalomaniac piercing the heart of our Lord whom gave us His Church and desires her to be one as his body and his bride.

The Rev'd Deacon John Needham

Transitus

Transfers out of the Parish:

Lionel & Mercedes Dickinson

Dean Worcester

New to the Parish:

John & Cathy Hagan

Ken & Jo Anna Weaver

A Look at the Liturgy

February brings us once again to the Pre-Lent season of the "gesimas." These Sundays first appeared in the liturgical calendar in the mid-8th century, and were so designated by their anticipation of Easter. Thus Septuagesima is roughly 70 days before Easter, Sexagesima approximately 60 days before and Quinquagesima exactly 50 days before Easter.

This pre-Lenten season was important in the mind of the Church as it allowed time for the faithful to formulate their Lenten rule. It is necessary to set aside ample time to reflect on how we will approach Lent year by year. The two and one-half weeks of Pre-Lent both reminds us of the approaching penitential season of as well as affords us time to put in place the rule we will follow this coming Lent.

Quite often, the first thought that springs to mind is what it is we will give up for Lent. It's important to recall that whatever we may "give up," such as desserts or alcohol, it is not because these things are evil in themselves (although we may choose to tackle a besetting sin with which we struggle) but rather by setting aside a part of the created order that we particularly enjoy, we recognize that we belong ultimately to the One who created these things for our enjoyment. We belong not to this world and the things of this world, but are only passing through this world to the next, and ultimately to our Maker.

Embracing such a Lenten rule helps us to see more closely whether certain things control us or whether we have control over these things. For when things such as vices, addictions, or patterns of destructive behaviors have control over us, we are unable to give that part of ourselves over to God. Lent brings an acute focus to this life-long struggle and helps us to see more clearly our need for grace and healing.

This awareness then brings us to the need to confess our sins before God in order to receive His forgiveness. To this end, Our Lord gave to His Church the Sacrament of Penance (Confession). There is no better way to experience a sense of forgiveness than in sacramental confession before a priest. When we examine our lives closely and see our many faults and failures, we are prone to excuse ourselves before God and neither appreciate the seriousness of our sin nor understand that we sin against both God and our fellow man. When we steel up the courage to make our confession to a priest, something of the gravity of our sin becomes apparent, but more importantly, sacramental confession allows the opportunity for both counsel as well as hearing audibly the words of absolution coming from Christ through the mouth of the priest.

If you have never before made your confession, a good place to begin is with a form of self-examination found in devotional manuals such as "The Practice of Religion" or the "Saint Augustine's Prayer Book," both of which are available in the Rector's study. Ask the Holy Ghost to help you look critically at your life, and then make a list of your sins. The form for confession is available at the altar rail so there is nothing you need to memorize. Then make an appointment with Fr Ostman, bring your list and leave the rest up to God. It's as simple as that.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9:30am

We are currently discussing issues facing the Church, such as Islam, the nature of the family, the sanctity of life and other contemporary issues. 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, 11 February, we will meet at 7pm to watch and discuss "The Burmese Harp." Here is a synopsis: *Badly wounded in Burma at the end of World War II, a Japanese soldier is nursed back to health by a Buddhist monk, then devotes himself to searching the jungle battlefields for the abandoned remains of dead soldiers to give them a decent burial. Directed by Kon Ichikawa, the Japanese production uses hauntingly poetic imagery to convey the main theme of life's value and the need to atone for its loss.*

Ash Wednesday, 25 February

Low Mass will be offered at noon and Sung Mass at 7pm with Imposition of Ashes at both.

Stations of the Cross:

On Fridays throughout Lent, Stations of the Cross will be held at 6:30pm followed by a light Lenten supper.

February 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 ✠ Epiphany IV <i>(St Ignatius, BM)</i> M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	2 Candlemas M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	3 S. Blasius, BM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	4 St Andrew Corsini, BC M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible 10.30am E.P. 5.30pm	5 St Agatha, VM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	6  St Titus, BC (St Dorothy, VM) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	7 Of Our Lady M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
8 ✠ Septuagesim a M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	9 St Cyril of Alexandria, BCD (St Appolonia, VM) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	10 St Scholastica, VM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	11 Our Lady of Lourdes M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible 10.30am E.P. 5.30pm	12 Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	13  feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	14 Of Our Lady (St Valentine, M) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
15 ✠ Sexagesima M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	16 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	17 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	18 St Mary Bernard, V M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible 10:30am E.P. 5.30pm	19 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	20  feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	21 Of Our Lady M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
22 ✠ Quinquagesima (St Peter's Chair at Antioch) M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	23 St Damian, BCD (Vigil) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	24 St Matthias, AP M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	25 ✠ Ash Wednesday M.P. 9.30am Bible 10:30am Mass 12pm E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7pm	26 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	27  St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Stations 6:30pm	28 feria M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm

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

ACW NEWS

ACW MEETING

A meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, 8 February, after the Coffee Hour. We will vote on officers for the new year. The slate is as follows:

President - Susan Knutsen
 Vice President - Fredricka Young
 Treasurer - Didi McConnell
 Secretary - Linda Bixler

FOOD DRIVE

Don't forget we are scheduled to volunteer at the Fauquier Food Coalition Distribution on Saturday 21 February at Warrenton Methodist Church. In preparation for that we have a food donation collection started in the community room. Please drop off any protein-rich foods, canned goods, and so forth that can be donated. We are also looking for paper products - toilet paper, kitchen rolls, tissues, napkins, etc. Be sure to tell your friends and neighbors about our collection. Then drop off your items to the church sometime before 20 February. Please let me know if you can help on the Saturday we are scheduled to distribute. We need to be at the Methodist Church in Warrenton at 8:00 a.m. and it runs through around noon.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

I know we are in tight budget times, but the other day I was in my local supermarket looking at the food labels and seeing what had a reasonable amount of protein listed in the contents. I came across a young mother and her son whom I observed briefly as I was perusing the shelves. The boy was reading the price labels and explaining things to her. Either she couldn't read or didn't know much math, but it was obvious with the items they were buying and how the son was explaining things - how many cans of X she could buy for X amount, with whatever they had - that they had only so much to spend. It hit me more how much our contributions mean to the community. We can help feed the hungry and give them a varied choice of diet. Please consider helping with donations and on the day we are scheduled to work.

FINALLY

We are thinking about sponsoring a 5K Fun Run on a Saturday sometime in the Spring, perhaps the end of April or beginning of May. We will keep you posted in this but think about how you might be able to assist in this fundraising activity.

Susan Knutsen
 540-349-2728