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The Newsletter of S. John the Baptist Anglican Church
Marshall, Virginia

Issue 28, February 2010



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Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

To begin, I must apologize for the late arrival of this number of the newsletter. As many of you know, I was away on an SSC retreat mid-month and then spent the last week of January at a seminar on S. Augustine's treatise on the Trinity, *De Trinitate*. This took away from the time usually allotted to putting the newsletter together, and so I find myself working to complete the February number with February already at hand!

As indicated on the parish kalendar, February is the month dedicated to the Holy Childhood of Our Lord. This is due, in part, because of the Feast of the Presentation of Christ on 2nd February (also called the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary or Candlemass), 40 days after His Nativity. The Law of Moses required the first-born male child to be "sanctified unto the Lord." This act reminded the Jewish people that Israel was God's firstborn son, and as a nation was set aside to be a witness of God's love to the surrounding nations.

Of course, the firstborn son in Israel pointed to the only-begotten Son of the Father, who would take our nature to Himself in the incarnation. Set apart by the Father, He is the ultimate witness of the Father's love, as the cross reveals. And we who are baptized into Christ are to continue His vocation of revealing God's love to a world that has lost its way and no longer understands its purpose. As we seek to imitate the example of Our Lord, we learn what it means to live for others by dying to our own self-centeredness. As we, by God's grace, practice a life of discipline and sacrifice, Christ will eventually be reborn in us. This is the practical application of Good Friday and Easter in our lives.

To assist us in preparing spiritually for the Queen of Feasts, the Church instructs us by way of the kalendar. In the seasons preceding Easter, our liturgical observance becomes progressively more austere. At the same time, the call to penitence becomes progressively deeper and stricter.

We begin with pre-Lent, from Septuagesima Sunday to Ash Wednesday, when the green of Epiphany-tide is replaced with violet, signaling the approaching solemnity. On Ash Wednesday through Passion Sunday, we move into Lent proper and begin our Lenten rule of fasting and abstinence. From here we enter Passion-tide, the last two weeks of Lent, when the statuary is draped in purple and our focus is shifted from the visual to the verbal. Then we enter into Holy Week itself, having witnessed Our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Lastly, we share in the sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday), devoted entirely to the commemoration of Our Lord's Passion, when our penitential observance reaches its peak. Finally, at the Easter Vigil, our Lenten disciplines behind us for another year, our joy cannot contain itself as we experience once again Our Lord's victory over death and sin!

Affectionately, your Friend and Pastor,

My Lenten Rule

1. Fasting and Abstinence. All weekdays of Lent (not Sundays) are fast days, meaning that we reduce the amount of food eaten. A good rule might be no snacks, no second helpings, no dessert and no alcohol. If you don't normally eat snacks or desserts or drink, you may want to consider giving up a favorite food. The idea is to undertake something sacrificial, yet not overwhelming. In addition, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are strict fasts: one full meal in the evening, and a light meal or colation in the afternoon. All those whose health, work, and age permit should fast. Abstaining from flesh meat on Wednesdays (when Our Lord was betrayed) as well as Fridays (required by the Prayer Book) is a common discipline during Lent. At the very least no flesh meat should be eaten on Fridays of Lent.

This Lent I resolve to:

2. Mass and Daily Office. Although we do not have weekday Masses except on Wednesday, they are scheduled as Holy Days occur. Lent is a good time to supplement the Sunday Mass, particularly as these weekday Masses are of a more intimate and quiet nature, and this can be a great blessing. However, we do offer Mattins at 9:30am and Evensong at 5:30pm daily in the Church, and all are invited to join Fr Ostman in daily prayer.

This Lent I resolve to:

3. Stations of the Cross. Each Friday in Lent at 6:30pm, we will follow Our Lord's way to the Cross, using the Stations in the Church. This devotion helps us to appreciate more fully His sacrifice on Good Friday.

Kudos

To all who faithfully provide the altar flowers and host the coffee hours Sunday after Sunday.

To Anita Kamphuis for hosting a lovely reception after the Confirmation service.

This Lent I resolve to:

4. Spiritual Reading and Classes. An ancient tradition is to read one of the spiritual classics or perhaps a book of Scripture during Lent. Fr Ostman can offer several suggestions. You may also want to join us Wednesday mornings at 10.45am for our study on the Acts of the Apostles. In addition, we offer Christian Formation classes Sunday morning at 9.30am and the Thursday night study classes at 7pm.

This Lent I resolve to:

5. Service and Self-denial. In addition to "giving up" something for Lent, you may want to "take on" something as well, such as volunteering at a hospital, visiting the shut-in or taking care of a neighbor who may be in need of assistance. You may also want to give up some special pleasure or recreation for Lent and perhaps give what you would have spent on it (if anything) as alms to the Church.

This Lent I resolve to:

6. Confession. A sacramental confession at the beginning and end of Lent is not only an opportunity for a thorough self-examination, but also a powerful weapon against the temptations that come our way in Lent. Nothing helps a shop-keeper plan for the future like a good stock taking. You may schedule your confession with Fr Ostman for any mutually convenient time. He will try always to be available Saturday evenings before Evening Prayer.

This Lent I resolve to:

Transitus

John and Cathy Hagan were Confirmed in the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church on Sunday 24 January 2010.

S. Jean-Marie Vianney

In our continuing look at S. Jean-Marie Vianney during the Year of the Priest, I include two of his quotes with my reflections:

- *When we are before the Blessed Sacrament, instead of looking about, let us shut our eyes and our mouth; let us open our heart: our good God will open His; we shall go to Him, He will come to us, the one to ask, the other receive; it will be like a breath from one to the other. What sweetness do we not find in forgetting ourselves in order to seek God! The saints lost sight of themselves that they might see nothing but God, and labour for Him alone; they forgot all created objects in order to find Him alone. This is the way to reach Heaven.* During Lent, our practice on Friday evenings is to follow the Stations of the Cross and then have Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which affords us the opportunity to simply rest in the Presence of Our Lord, and give thanks for that Presence in the Blessed Sacrament. On these Friday evenings, remember the advice of the Curé d'Ars, and allow God to speak to you in the silence of adoration.

- *Go to confession to the Blessed Virgin, or to an angel; will they absolve you? No. Will they give you the Body and Blood of Our Lord? No. The Holy Virgin cannot make her Divine Son descend into the Host. You might have two hundred angels there, but they could not absolve you. A priest, however simple he may be, can do it; he can say to you, "Go in peace; I pardon you."* During the penitential seasons such as Advent and Lent, making one's confession is strongly recommended. Why? Because as a rule of thumb, whenever we seek to strengthen our relationship with God, through discipline such as fasting and abstinence, Satan will redouble his efforts to derail us. We need to do serious house-keeping to ensure there is nothing in our souls he can use to accomplish his purpose. As tempting as it is to say that we don't need a priest to confess our sins, how often do we overlook our sins or excuse them by saying to ourselves "that's just the way I am." When we confess in the presence of a priest, not only are we drawn away from our subjectivity, but we also have the great joy of hearing the priest pronounce verbally the absolution.

A Paper Presented to the DHC Clericus

For years now, I like many other Anglo-catholic priests, have been praying for the visible corporate reunion of the Church. As they say, be careful what you pray for.

The recently promulgated Apostolic Constitution has now forced me to reflect seriously upon this petition that has been expressed repeatedly in my prayers. Not that I had any doubts that God does both listen to and answer providentially the prayers of the faithful. Do we not teach our people that when we come to God with our petitions, offering them up with the prayer that all be done according to His will, that He does hear us? Along with the stock response to the rejoinder "then why doesn't He answer them" that He does, in His time and as is best for us.

So now we have a situation where we know we have been praying in accordance to God's will, as clearly expressed in Our Lord's High Priestly Prayer, and God seems to have, in some profound way, answered our prayers.

S. John records Our Lord's prayer as thus: *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Certainly, what Our Lord prays, He effects. Our catechetical teaching reminds us of this fact in describing the four marks of the Church: One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. At the same time, if the Church is the extension of the Incarnation – born out of Our Lord's wounded side – then we recognize that while animated by the Holy Ghost, she remains constituted in human flesh. She has two natures, divine and human: the Holy Ghost poured out at Pentecost and the individual members baptized into Christ who comprise His mystical body.

So while the visible Church on earth appears divided and torn asunder, at some level she remains one, the unifying principle being Christ Himself. Invariably and









inevitably, sin works to break down her visible unity and her witness and thus ultimately her vocation to reconcile the world to God. This tripartite nature of the Church – structure, proclamation of the Gospel and sacerdotal ministry (for ultimately the world can only be reconciled to God through sacrifice) – is encapsulated in Christ Himself. United to His Father in will, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, offering up Himself as both Priest and Victim, this is the unanimous witness of the Gospels.

Whereas Our Lord was able to resist the temptations of the world *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me, the flesh If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread* and the devil *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down*, all too often we are not. Pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and sloth are far too often regarded as virtues to be practiced in the Church rather than humility, generosity, charity, meekness, chastity, temperance, and diligence. This is why the Church must always be open to reform. Every period of triumphalism is inevitably followed by one of complacency and decay. Invariably, in these bleak periods of Church history God raises up those, who by following the life of virtue, shine a light on our sins. Blessed Theresa of Calcutta comes to mind as a most recent example. But then how we respond is another matter. We know how the world responded when confronted with perfect virtue Himself.

To proclaim the Gospel with integrity, the Church must not only speak with one voice, but endeavor to live out the Gospel consistently, in accordance with Our Lord's will. This is all the more urgent with the battle lines once again being drawn between Islam and Christianity. And this is precisely where the sacerdotal ministry of the Church is so necessary.

The ministerial priesthood is the particular manifestation of universal priesthood, sometimes called the priesthood of all believers, in the same way the Levitical priesthood was the particular manifestation of Israel as a kingdom of priests. We recall that God called the Hebrew nation to a very specific vocation. By following the Law given at Mount Sinai, they were to mediate His very nature to the nations, for the Law was not simply proscriptive in purpose, but descriptive as well.

February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>THE CHILD JESUS</p>	<p>1</p> <p>S. Ignatius, BM</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>2 ✠</p> <p>Candlemass (Purification of the BVM)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm</p>	<p>3</p> <p>S. Blase, BM</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am <i>Bible Study 10:30</i> E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>4</p> <p>S. Andrew Corsini, BC</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>5</p> <p>S. Agatha, VM</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>S. Titus, BC (S. Dorothy, VM)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am Rosary 9.45am E.P. 5.30pm</p>
<p>7</p> <p>SEXAGESIMA</p> <p>L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Monthly Requiem</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p>S. Cyril of Alexandria, BCD</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>S. Scholastica, V</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am <i>Bible Study 10:30</i> E.P. 5.30pm WNM 7.00pm</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Our Lady of Lourdes</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>12 </p> <p>Seven Holy Founders of the Servites, C</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Feria</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>
<p>14</p> <p>QUINQUAGESIMA (S. Valentine, PrM)</p> <p>L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am</p>	<p>15</p> <p>SS Faustinus and Jovita, MM</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Shrove Tuesday (Feria)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>17 ✠</p> <p>ASH WEDNESDAY</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am <i>Bible Study 10:30</i> E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7pm</p>	<p>18</p> <p>S. Mary Bernard, V</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Lenten Feria</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm SOC 6.30pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Lenten Feria</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>
<p>21</p> <p>LENT I</p> <p>L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am</p>	<p>22</p> <p>S. Peter's Chair at Antioch (Lenten Feria)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>S. Peter Damian, BCD (Lenten Feria) (Vigil)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>24 ✠</p> <p>S. Matthias, AP (Ember Day)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am <i>Bible Study 10:30</i> E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Lenten Feria</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Ember Day</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm SOC 6.30pm</p>	<p>27</p> <p>S. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, C (Ember Day)</p> <p>M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm</p>
<p>28 ✠</p> <p>LENT II</p> <p>L.M. 8am M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am</p>	 <p>S. IGNATIUS</p>	 <p>PURIFICATION</p>	 <p>S. MATTHIAS</p>	 <p>OUR LADY</p>	 <p>S. AGATHA</p>	 <p>S. TITUS</p>

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As the Levitical priesthood was a type of the priesthood of Christ, so the Christian priesthood emanates from the priesthood of Christ. No man is a priest in his own right. As Elijah, when ascending into the heavens, threw down his mantle to Elisha, so Christ passed on his priesthood to the Apostles that Holy Thursday night in that upper room. Washing their feet, as the Levitical priests would do before crossing the threshold to perform their temple duties, Our Lord sanctified them (set them aside) to carry on His ministry of reconciling the entire world to the Father.

Just before Our Lord prays for the unity of the Church, S. John records: *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.* Following the usage of "sanctify" in the Hebrew Scriptures, Our Lord is saying: For their sakes, I make myself a priest, I set myself aside to offer up the perfect sacrifice. And this is why the ministerial priesthood is indispensable, for it is a continuation of Christ's act of reconciliation.

Whereas the Hebrew prophets only mediated God to the people, the priest performs a dual role. We see this in the action of the priest at the Mass. When he turns to address the people, he mediates God to the people. But when he turns to the altar, he mediates the people to God, most particularly in the sacrifice of the Mass itself, in which we are joined to the eternal offering of the Son – now in His glorified humanity – to the Father. And this brings us to the primary vocation of the ministerial priesthood, that of offering up the sacred mysteries.

In the words of the sometime Canon and Chancellor of S. Paul's Cathedral, London, W.C.E. Newbolt tells the priest how to wear aright the Eucharistic Vestments: He has the Helmet of salvation on his head, the Amice which shields him from the dazzling and distracting blows of the world, from intellectual perplexity and spiritual temptations. He is covered from head to foot with the Alb of perfect purity; he has learned to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. He is girt with the Girdle of absolute temperance; he is not the slave of any habit, however innocent in itself, but is girded in tight from the enjoyment of any creature, which is used for its own sake apart from the necessities of life. He bears on his neck the Stole of humility; he is the servant of God and the servant of his people; his whole life is dedicated to the service of humanity. He is covered before and behind with the Chasuble marked with the cross. He is wrapped up in Christ. His intercessions are joined with His. His active hands are pierced with His. His busy feet are pierced with His. His side is pierced in compassion with His. While on his arm hangs the Maniple of sympathy, to weep with them that weep, to know something of the Beatitude of the mourners, and to minister to the distressed. Wherever we go in the ministry we are surrounded with the symbolism of utter surrender; but directly we brush past these mute reminders, directly we become official, cold, or perfunctory, we run tremendous risks.

There can be no greater risk to the soul than to handle the Body and Blood of the Son of God as though it were a mere task to be gotten through. So how do we militate against this risk? By becoming men of prayer. By this I mean not just saying the Divine Office but praying it as a conversation of both heart and mind before Our Lord. I confess a certain inconsistency in saying the Divine Office and discovered early on in my ministry that the best way to combat this tendency towards sloth was to advertise Mattins and Evensong daily in the church, and then show up to pray these offices, whether anyone else joins me or not. After all, I am to pray the Office on behalf of the parish. Of course, the daily rhythm of the Psalms, Lessons and Canticles can either stupefy or penetrate, depending on our spiritual state. To quote S. Theresa of Avila: It is impossible for a person who prays regularly to remain in serious sin; because the two are incompatible, one or the other will have to be given up.

But along with the Divine Office, we have also the responsibility to intercede on behalf of our people. Can there be any better way to become spiritually intimate with people than to learn their concerns and then offer them up to God on their behalf? True intercession involves the bearing of one another's burdens, the bearing of the Cross of Christ. He who would be my disciple must take up his cross daily and follow me. It is not simply a list to be worked through, not even a concern for which to be prayed; each intercession is a person to be picked up and carried until the immediate crisis is past.

Lastly, there is the time to be spent before the Blessed Sacrament, the loved in the Presence of the Lover. Here, there is nothing to be said, but much to be heard.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday Night Home Study: 4 Feb 7pm

We begin a new opportunity for learning about our faith by meeting in homes on Thursday evenings. Our first meeting will be at the Knutsens when we will begin our study of The Practice of Religion by Fr Archibald Knowles.

First Saturday Rosary: 6 Feb, 9.45am

We will meditate on the Glorious Mysteries this month. Please join us even if you have never prayed the Rosary before. Rosaries and prayers are available at the Lady Shrine.

Weekly Bible Study: Wed, 10.45am

Our Bible Study meets after Morning Prayer at 9:30am and Mass at 10am. Please join us for our study of the Acts of the Apostles and bring your friends.

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9.30am

In February, we continue our examination of Anglicanism. 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*

Wednesday Night at the Movies:

On Wednesday, 10 Feb. we will meet at 7pm to watch "Henry Poole is Here." Rather than living his last days to the fullest after he learns that he only has six weeks left on Earth, Henry Poole cuts himself off from his fiancée and his family and binges on Twinkies, pizza and liquor. But a fortuitous miracle and a clash with his eccentric, meddling neighbors derail Henry's plans.

Stations of the Cross: 19 & 26 Feb. 6.30pm

This Lent, we will again follow the Stations of the Cross. We will follow this with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and a simple Lenten supper.

February Agenda

Candlemass	Tuesday, 2 February 7pm
Rosary	Saturday, 6 February, 9:45am
Thursday Night Home Study	Thursday, 4 February, 7pm
Wednesday Night at the Movies	Wednesday, 10 February, 7pm
Ash Wednesday	Wednesday, 17 February, 10am & 7pm
Stations of the Cross	Fridays, 19 & 26 February 6.30pm
S. Matthias	Wednesday, 24 February, 10am

The Anglican Church of
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Parish Brochure

Color brochures are available for advertising our parish. You may find them in the back of the church by the west doors and in the Annex. Please take a few, and leave them in any place you frequent during the week.

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