

January Agenda

The Circumcision of Christ	Friday, 1 January, 12pm
Rosary	Saturday, 2 January, 9:45am
Epiphany	Wednesday, 6 January, 10am
Baptism of Christ	Wednesday, 13 January 10am
Wednesday Night at the Movies	
	Wednesday, 13 January, 7pm
Conversion of S. Paul	Monday, 25 January, 7pm

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

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 27, January 2010

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

As the culture begins the secular new year with New Year's Day, the Church recognizes the Octave Day (the eighth day) of the Nativity with the Feast of the Circumcision. According to Jewish Law, a male child was to be circumcised on the "eighth day," one week and one day after his birth. Why eight days? According to some Jewish scholars, this necessitates the child living through at least one Sabbath day. Thus having experienced the holiness of the Sabbath, he may then enter into the covenant of the Jewish people.

Behind this ceremonial act stood the rich texture of the covenantal relationship between God and His chosen people. Unless we understand something of the nature of this relationship, much of the Jewish foundation of our faith will be lost on us. In Scripture, a covenant is an agreement in which God makes certain promises to His people and in return expects certain behaviors from them. This was true of the covenant God made with Noah, with Abraham and with Moses. In each occasion, God promised some sort of providential care over His people and in exchange asked of them certain moral behaviors as evidence of their sincerity to enter into that covenant.

These preliminary covenants find their fulfillment in the "new and everlasting covenant" made at the Last Supper. Here, Our Lord offers us His own Body and Blood to transform us into a new creation, provided that we are properly disposed to receive that inestimable grace. Again, God makes certain promises to us and we respond by living in accordance with His desires for us.

This concept takes on a much deeper meaning as we reflect upon the idea of "New Year's resolutions." As we begin yet another year, my prayer for each one of us is that we will grow in our appreciation of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and that we will allow God's love present in that great gift to inflame our lives in a new and more powerful way. May we in 2010 truly become animated by the love of God made manifest in so powerful a mystery!

Affectionately, your Friend and Pastor,

The Deacon's Dais

This year my family drove south to spend Christmas with my in-laws. With my father-in-law still recovering from surgery and my nephew's family in town (the Anthony Patnode stationed in Missouri for whom we pray) we hugged and squeezed my eldest daughter and grandson in Warrenton before leaving for a period of rest and celebration.

In spite of the customary hours of jigsaw puzzle building, video game playing and snacking constantly upon the seasonal treats, I found some time for extra reading and prayer during this special feast in our calendar. I would not trade lightly the slow and comfortable string of days in which the blending of multiple liturgical services served to heighten the fervor of my personal prayer.

Last month, I wrote on how our personal prayer finds its fulfillment in the Mass, with the grace of the Sacrament, in turn, strengthening our desire for personal prayer. Over the next several months I will sketch briefly the kinds of personal prayer I have in mind.

To be sure, each of us come into the presence of almighty God simply by our yearning for Him. Yet personal prayer can range from the panicked words of the student before a

math test to the transcendent prayer of the contemplative mystic. Before we can make any progress in prayer, we must recognize that our prayers are closer to those of the student while we aspire to those of the mystic. That is, we are to move from asking for God's help via spontaneous prayer, towards that kind of prayer in which we stand naked and humble before God, Who may or may not respond as He sees fit for our good.

Prayer is man reaching for God and not some hopeful words mumbled into the mist. We offer ourselves and our needs to a compassionate and righteous Lord, not as a quid-pro-quo for some misguided thought of our own deserving. We are His unworthy servants who have failed our Master time and time again, yet still beg His indulgence.

So, when we come before the Father, the Creator of all, by simply closing our eyes and calling upon His name, what happens? He hears us! As the old saw goes: He spends more time waiting for the call than we spend making it. This condemning thought should move us to understand that while the prayer of the math student is real, there is much more that awaits us in an authentic life of prayer.

The Rev'd Deacon John Needham

Transitus

There were no Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals recorded in the Parish Register this past month.

Kudos

To Susan Knutsen and the ACW for their artful greening of the church for Christmas.

To Sherry Twining for helping to make our Christmas Eve so joyous

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5. How does one receive Communion?

Kneeling at the altar rail is the standard posture for receiving the Sacrament as it signifies our obeisance, the proper reverence due the King of all creation now made manifest upon the altar. If, however, one cannot kneel because of physical health concerns, one is most welcome to stand. The Host is normally received either on the tongue (to avoid any possibility of crumbs going astray) or in the palm of the right hand (crossed over the left hand and raised to the level of the breast) and then lifted to the mouth to consume.

The chalice is received by allowing the deacon or celebrant to place its rim on your lips. Then with your hand(s) on either the base or the bowl of the chalice, help tilt the cup to receive a sip of the Precious Blood. Please be mindful of your neighbor to the left, and do not get up to leave the altar rail after communicating until he has received the chalice, for fear of accidentally knocking his arm and spilling the Precious Blood.

While the practice of intinction (dipping the Host in the wine) has become widespread recently, it should be remembered that most infections pass from hand to hand, not mouth to mouth. For 2000 years, priests have consumed the remains of the chalice with no recorded ill-health. The same cannot be said about the greetings after Mass at the back door of the church.

This is not the first time the matter of the chalice has been raised in the Church. During the Middle Ages, it became common practice to withhold the chalice from the faithful for fear of accidental sacrilege. Behind this practice was the Doctrine of Concomitance, which states that the Person of Christ cannot be divided, and therefore He is wholly to be received in either the consecrated Host or the consecrated Wine.

While it is normative for the faithful to receive the Blessed Sacrament in "both kinds," that is in both the consecrated Host and consecrated Wine, for various reasons, they may choose not to. For example, someone with gluten intolerance may receive only the Precious Blood. Or someone conscious of the overt symptoms of his cold may choose to receive only the Sacred Body.

No one should feel obligated to receive the Sacrament in both kinds; to abstain from one kind or the other, simply cross your arms against your chest and bow your head to receive the priest's blessing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Weekly Bible Study: Wed, 10:45am

Our weekly Bible Study meets after Mass on Wednesdays mornings. This month we will finish S. John's Gospel and then move on to begin a study of the Acts of the Apostles. Please join us and bring a friend or two.

First Saturday Rosary: 2 Jan, 9:45am

We will meditate on the Sorrowful Mysteries this month. Please join us even if you have never prayed the Rosary before. Rosaries and prayers are available from Fr. Ostman.

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9:30am

In January, we continue our discussion of "Anglicanism 101." 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*

















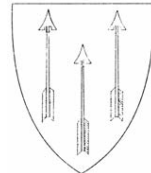



Feast of the Epiphany: 6th, January

This important feast marks the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Additionally, the Church has seen this feast as the revelation of the Blessed Trinity. We will keep this Holy Day of Obligation with Mass at 10am on Wednesday, the 6th of January.

Wednesday Night at the Movies:

On Wednesday 13 January we will meet at 7pm to watch "Becket." When King Henry II names his friend and former drinking partner Thomas à Becket the new Archbishop of Canterbury, he counts on his unbending loyalty when it comes to religious matters. But what he doesn't count on is Becket actually taking his job so seriously. Peter O'Toole, Richard Burton and co-star John Gielgud turn in a trio of Oscar-nominated performances in this critically acclaimed drama rooted deep in English history.

January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1  CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST M.P. 9.30am Mass 12pm E.P. 5.30pm	2 Octave of S. Stephen M.P. 9.30am Rosary 9.45am E.P. 5.30pm
3  MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	4 Octave of the Holy Innocents M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	5 Vigil M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	6  EPIPHANY M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am Bible Study 10:45am E.P. 5.30pm	7 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	8  Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	9 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
10  HOLY FAMILY (Epiphany II) M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	11 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	12 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	13 BAPTISM CHRIST M.P. 9.30am Mass 10.00am Bible Study 10:45am E.P. 5.30 WVNM 7pm	14 S. Hilary, BCD M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	15 S. Paul, Hermit M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	16 S. Marcellius, PM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
17  EPIPHANY II (S. Anthony, Ab) M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	18 Chair of S. Peter at Rome M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	19 S. Wulfstan, BC M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	20 S. Sebastian, M M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	21 S. Agnes, VM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	22 SS. Vincent & Anastasius, MM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	23 S. Raymund of Pennaforte, C M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
24  EPIPHANY III (S. Timothy, BM) M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	25  CONVERSION OF S. PAUL M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7.00pm	26 S. Polycarp, BM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	27 S. John Chrysostom M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	28 S. Peter Nolasco, C M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	29 S. Francis de Sales, BCD M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	30 Decollation of Charles I, KM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
31  SEPTUAGESIMA M.P. 9.00am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am						

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

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:

- *Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself.* To continue the theme of our Deacon's comments this month, S. Jean-Marie Vianney speaks of prayer as an experience of love, an idea far removed from the sterile, formulaic prayers we so often recite. For S. Jean-Marie, conversation with God was an immersion into God's depth of being, God who not only loves, but more importantly is love. When we define our relationship with God solely by words, we actually create a human barrier between God and us. When we allow ourselves to move past words and experience Him as He is, we lose the need to articulate that experience and can begin to enter into a deeper relationship with Him.

- *If we could comprehend all the good things contained in Holy Communion, nothing more would be wanting to content the heart of man. The miser would run no more after his treasures, or the ambitious after glory; each would shake off the dust of the earth, leave the world, and fly away towards heaven.* Here S. Jean-Marie speaks of the profound grace contained in the Blessed Sacrament. When we recognize that we are made for God, and that we find our ultimate fulfilment only in Him, then we also come to see that God only can provide the means to achieve that fulfilment. He does so by giving Himself intimately in the Body and Blood of His Son, so that we receive His very being into our being. Our problem is that we cannot see this ultimate reality; we are continually distracted by the competing voices of "the world." We confuse our purpose of union with God with a desire for power. We confuse our purpose of knowing God's love with lusts for lesser things. But these things will never satisfy; we will still sense an emptiness no matter how purposeful our pursuit of them. Only God can provide that which satisfies us completely, Himself.

A Look at the Liturgy

Recent discussions in the parish have resulted in an expressed desire to learn more about our faith as Anglicans. To that end, I would like to address some FAQs (frequently asked questions) surrounding the matter of Holy Communion, being mindful of S. Paul's admonition: "*whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*" (1 Corinthians 11:27-28)

1. Who should receive Holy Communion?

The Blessed Sacrament is reserved by the express teaching of the Church and of Scripture to those who have been admitted to the Body of Christ through the sacrament of Holy Baptism and have been or are "ready and desirous" to be Confirmed by a bishop in apostolic succession.

2. How often should we receive Communion?

It may be received as often as daily, if the communicant is spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament with that

frequency. As a minimum, it should be received at least at Easter and at other major feasts of the Church.

3. What is required of the communicants?

There should be no knowledge of unconfessed grievous sin on our conscience; we should have an earnest desire to lead the life God desires of us and to be in charity with all with whom we come in contact in our daily lives.

4. Who should not receive communion?

As mentioned above, those with unconfessed **grievous sin** on their conscience should not receive. Earnest repentance and a desire for amendment is required by our faith before we can receive the Sacrament. Also, if we have **unquiet conscience**, we should refrain from the Sacrament until we have had the occasion to speak with a priest and resolve what may be troubling us. Those such as the **unbaptized, the unconfirmed, and the penitent awaiting absolution** may make an act of spiritual communion and may also come to the altar rail to be blessed by the priest.

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