

May Agenda

Rosary	Saturday, 8 May, 9:45am
Thursday Night Study Group	Thursday, 6 May, 7pm
Ascension Day	Thursday, 13 May, 6pm
Wednesday Night at the Movies	Wednesday, 19 May, 7pm
Thursday Night Study Group	Thursday, 20 May, 7pm
Whit-Monday	Monday, 24 May, 6pm
Whit-Tuesday	Tuesday, 25 May, 6pm

Parish Brochure

Color brochures are available for advertising our parish. You will 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 31, May 2010

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

As we continue to reflect on the central mystery of our faith, the Resurrection of Christ, we often find a disconnect between the victory over sin won by Our Lord, and the lack of that victory within our own lives. Why is it that we so often struggle with sin, and often the same sins, when on the Cross, Our Lord defeated the hold that sin has over us?

The first thing that can be said is that we are not unique in our struggle. The Saints all speak of this battle between the will and the grip that sin has upon us. Our nature has been weakened by the effects of sin; the more often we commit sin, the more our nature is bent and twisted by that sin. This is why the Saints so often teach us about the importance of virtue. Pursuing the virtuous life helps eradicate sin, as each virtue practiced strengthens our will and helps us combat the competing vice.

But all too often, we can feel beat down by sin and simply give up the struggle. We give into our particular besetting sins or vices, and excuse ourselves by saying that we just can't do any better. At other times, we let guilt overwhelm us and keep us from trying to do better. And then there is complacency, the ennui that so easily besets us in our spiritual lives.

Of all of these potential distractions in the spiritual life, it's the last one that seems to affect most parishes. When there is a full schedule of activities and services in the life of a parish, it's very easy to assume that someone else will be present so that I don't have to be. But remember: the goal of having a diverse schedule is to be able to offer to everyone at least one thing that will suit both their interests and their availability. In a parish our size, it becomes apparent quickly when people don't participate.

But then, it does come down to a matter of priorities. When God is not first in our lives, then we will not be inclined particularly to do more than what we consider the absolute minimum: just enough so that we don't incur God's wrath on Judgement Day but not enough so as to deprive ourselves of the things we really want to do with our lives. But we really know better than that, don't we?

Affectionately, your Friend and Pastor,

Diocesan Synod News

The annual Synod of the Diocese of the Holy Cross met at the Pro-Cathedral of the Epiphany 29-30 April in Columbia, South Carolina.

Bishop Hewett began the meeting of the Clericus (meeting of the clergy) by introducing Fr Geoffrey Neal, our former rector, and now liaison between the DHC and Forward in Faith in the United Kingdom. Fr Neal spoke about the Personal Ordinariate the Holy Father has extended to Anglicans and of those in the UK who might be interested in taking advantage of this offer. He spoke of the importance of our Anglican patrimony, or as he calls it, the Anglican mind, and efforts both to articulate that mind and to preserve it for Anglicans who do not take advantage of the Ordinariate. The Anglican Association, of which he is a founding member, is also working with the so-called "Confessing Anglicans," a group of Evangelical Anglicans, to lead them into a deeper understanding of catholic ecclesiology and Holy Orders.

Bishop Hewett then spoke briefly about the Diocese's involvement with the Fellowship of Anglican Churches in the Americas and of our involvement with the emerging Anglican Province of North America. ACNA has committed itself to do an in-depth Scriptural study on the question of ordaining women to Holy Orders, and this study will be discussed at its next meeting in June. The Bishop also talked about ecumenical relations between Rome and Orthodoxy, and the willingness to consider consensus around the united faith of the undivided Church of the first millenium. The Bishop reiterated the necessity

Kudos

To John Hagan who keeps the lawn looking like a spread from Home & Garden.

For everyone who gave up their Saturday morning to turn out for the parish clean-up.

To Michele Ballarin for filling in on the "bench!"

of ecumenism as being consistent with Our Lord's express will as well as presenting a united front against the encroaching threat of militant Islam.

Canon Robert Bader then introduced his discussions with the Polish National Catholic Church. He gave a brief history of their origin and subsequent break with the "Old Catholics," as well as the various factions within the PNCC. In their recent Declaration of Scranton, the bishops of the PNCC have expressed clearly their desire to adhere to the basic faith and morals of the catholic faith.

Fr "Chip" Angell then presented his thoughts on the current economic crisis and the implications for pastoral outreach in each of our parishes. A further consideration will be the consequences of humanism replacing our Christian roots within the culture. As the virtue of hope diminishes, it will be more incumbent upon faithful Christians to exhibit that virtue and to have the necessary resources with which to reach out to those in need. We must begin within our parishes to "bear one another's burdens" and reach out from there.

Finally, Fr Tom Monet spoke of his work with an inter-denominational prayer group in the Philadelphia area that ministers to those spiritually oppressed, including some who have experienced demonic possession. As the culture continues its spiral downward, Fr Monet and others have noticed a significant increase in men who have fallen victim to addictive behaviors, whether drugs, alcohol or sex. In particular, he has seen an increase in the demon of isolation, as people become more and more insular. He strongly encouraged that each parish initiate a prayer ministry for those within their spiritual influence and care.

Transitus

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

A Look at the Liturgy

Healing has always been an important ministry of the Christian Church, following after the example of Our Lord Himself. During His public ministry Our Lord healed many people for all degrees of sickness. He then, in turn, gave this power to His followers. S. James is very explicit in his epistle: *"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."*

In other words, when we find ourselves confronting any sickness we are to avail ourselves of the Church's healing ministry. For more serious illness, such that may very likely lead to death, the Church gives us the Sacrament of Holy Unction. This is sometimes referred to as the "Last Rites," since this sacrament is intended to prepare seriously sick persons for the journey into the next part of life. In this Sacrament, olive oil consecrated by a bishop for this purpose is used to anoint the sick person at the five senses (sight, hearing, smelling, tasting/speaking, touching), along with prayers for forgiveness and for healing.

For lesser illnesses, there is the "Laying on of Hands," along with prayers for God's healing of body and spirit. In this latter ministry, one asks for prayers for oneself or for another, entering fully into S. Paul's admonition to *"bear one another's burdens"* (Galatians 6:2). Often on the Sunday nearest the Feast of S. Luke the Evangelist on 18 October (who is also identified as a physician by S. Paul in the New Testament), we offer the opportunity to come to the altar rail for this ministry. In addition, the Sunday nearest the Feast of S. Blaise (3 February), we offer the traditional "blessing of throats," another example of the healing ministry in the Church. Everyone may and most do take advantage of these opportunities to receive Christ's healing power manifested in this way.

However, the Sacrament of Unction should be reserved for those who are seriously ill, perhaps even more than once for the same illness should a new crisis arise, as well as to the elderly who are weak but do not have any specific illness. It may also be administered to children who are old enough to appreciate the nature of the Sacrament.

This being said, neither your priest nor your deacon have been granted the gift of clairvoyance. If you find yourself needing either the Sacrament of Unction or the Laying on of Hands, please alert the parish office as soon as possible so that your parish clergy can offer the healing that Our Lord intends for each one of us.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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 the Acts of the Apostles and bring your friends.

First Saturday Rosary: 8 May, 9.45am

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

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9.30am

In April, we continue our examination of the life of John Henry Cardinal Newman. Newman was one of the leading figures in the 19th century Oxford Movement who converted to Roman Catholicism and is presently a candidate for beatification. Newman's thought influenced the Second Vatican Council and who advocated authentic ecumenical interaction, something in which we should be interested. This class is recommended for all in the parish so that we will be able 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 19 May we will meet at 7pm to watch and discuss the film, "The Gods Must be Crazy." Here is the Netflix review: *Three vignettes highlight the surreal in this 1980 classic comedy written and directed by Jamie Uys. Among the three, the one about a Coke bottle falling out of the heavens and becoming a one-of-a-kind object coveted by everyone in a small African village is a cult favorite. The bottle creates such dissonance that its finder, N!xau, decides the gods must've been crazy to give such a gift, so he sets out to drop it off the edge of the world.*

May 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 REGINA COELI	 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION	 THE ANNUNCIATION	 THE VISITATION	 PURIFICATION	 ASSUMPTION	1 SS. Philip and James, APP, MM M.P. 9.30am Rosary 9.45am E.P. 5.30pm
2 ✠ Easter IV L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	3 Invention of the Holy Cross M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	4 S. Monica, W M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	5 S. Pius V, PC M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible Study 10:30 E.P. 5.30pm	6 S. John before the Latin Gate M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	7  S. Stanislaus, BM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	8 Apparition of S. Michael, Archangel M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
9 ✠ Easter V L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	10 Rogation Monday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	11 Rogation Tuesday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	12 Vigil of Ascension M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible Study 10:30 E.P. 5.30pm	13 ✠ ASCENSION DAY M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7pm	14  Octave (S. Boniface, M) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	15 S. John Baptist de la Salle, C (Octave) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
16 ✠ Asc. Sunday L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	17 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	18 Octave M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	19 S. Dunstan, BC M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible Study 10:30 E.P. 5.30pm WNM 7pm	20 Octave Day (St Bernardin of Siena, C) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	21  Resumed Mass of Sunday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	22 Vigil of Pentecost M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
23 ✠ Whitsunday L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	24 ✠ Whit-Monday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7pm	25 ✠ Whit-Tuesday M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm Mass 7pm	26 Ember Day (S. Philip Neri, C) M.P. 9.30am Mass 10am Bible Study 10:30 E.P. 5.30pm	27 Octave (S. Bede, C) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	28  Ember Day (S. Augustine, BC) M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	29 Ember Saturday in Whitsun Week M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm
30 ✠ Trinity Sunday L.M. 8am M.P. 9am SCF 9.30am Mass 10.30am	31 Queenship of the BVM M.P. 9.30am E.P. 5.30pm	 ASCENSION	 ST DUNSTAN	 TRINITY	 PENTECOST	 ST AUGUSTINE

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

S. Jean-Marie Vianney - On Anger

Anger is an emotion of the soul, which leads us violently to repel whatever hurts or displeases us. This emotion, my children, comes from the devil: it shows that we are in his hands; that he is the master of our heart; that he holds all the strings of it, and makes us dance as he pleases. See, a person who puts himself in a passion is like a puppet; he knows neither what he says, nor what he does; the devil guides him entirely. He strikes right and left; his hair stands up like the bristles of a hedgehog; his eyes start out of his head—he is a scorpion, a furious lion. . . . Why do we, my children, put ourselves into such a state? Is it not pitiable? It is, mind, because we do not love the good God. Our heart is given up to the demon of pride, who is angry when he thinks himself despised; to the demon of avarice, who is irritated when he suffers any loss; to the demon of luxury, who is indignant when his pleasures are interfered with. . . . How unhappy we are, my children, thus to be the sport of demons? They do whatever they please with us; they suggest to us evil-speaking, calumny, hatred, vengeance: they even drive us so far as to put our neighbour to death. See, Cain killed his brother Abel out of jealousy; Saul wished to take away the life of David; Theodosius caused the massacre of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, to revenge a personal affront. . . . If we do not put our neighbour to death, we are angry with him, we curse him, we give him to the devil, we wish for his death, we wish for our own. In our fury, we blaspheme the holy Name of God, we accuse His Providence. . . . What fury, what impiety! And what is still more deplorable, my children, we are carried to these excesses for a trifle, for a word, for the least injustice! Where is our faith! Where is our reason? We say in excuse that it is anger that makes us swear; but one sin cannot excuse another sin. The good God equally condemns anger, and the excesses that are its consequences. . . . How we sadden our guardian angel! He is always there at our side to send us good thoughts, and he sees us do nothing but evil. . . . If we did like Saint Remigius, we should never be angry. See, this saint, being questioned by a Father of the desert how he managed to be always in an even temper, replied, "I often consider that my guardian angel is always by my side, who assists me in all my needs, who tells me what I ought to do and what I ought to say, and who writes down, after each of my actions, the way in which I have done it." Philip II, King of Spain, having passed several hours of the night in writing a long letter to the Pope, gave it to his secretary to fold up and seal. He, being half asleep, made a mistake; when he meant to put sand on the letter, he took the ink bottle and covered all the paper with ink. While he was ashamed and inconsolable, the king said, quite calmly, "No very great harm is done; there is another sheet of paper"; and he took it, and employed the rest of the night in writing a second letter, without showing the least displeasure with his secretary.

Parish Growth

The topic of parish growth is one that raises a variety of opinions, with most parishioners wanting to see our parish grow. Admittedly, there can be a fear of growth. Those who find any kind of change difficult will be fearful of the changes parish growth will bring. Those who enjoy the sense of being a "big fish in a small pond" may worry about their role should newer parishioners want to get involved.

These attitudes will prevent us from truly desiring parish growth, and will make us resistant to growth, even if we are not aware of them.

For our parish to grow, each of us needs to desire that growth and we each need to do our part. Some will be more active than others in bringing visitors to church, but we can all desire growth and we can all pray for growth.

Any lasting growth will come only as God gives the increase, and not through any clever marketing that we might enact. However, for

God to give the increase, we must first align ourselves with His will for our lives, in short, each of us must desire a deep conversion of intellect and will. For only as we individually become conformed to God's desire for us, will we as a parish conform to His intention for us and thus attract others who are seeking God and His mercy and love.

A Prayer for Parish Growth

Most gracious and loving God, I offer myself up to thee this day to be an instrument of thy love to those I meet. Teach me to listen more than talk and to respond quickly to all in need. Give me grace to offer a word of encouragement to those who are suffering and to join with those who have occasion to rejoice. May I never begrudge anyone whom thou hast blessed. I pray also for S. John's Church; bring to our parish those who are searching for truth and those who long for a deeper experience of thy love. May we grow, not only in numbers but most especially in love for each other. Give me grace to offer more of my time, talents and treasure to advance thy kingdom where thou hast placed me, in the parish of S. John the Baptist. This I pray, in the Name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.