

September Agenda

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| 1 September | Labor Day
Office Closed |
| 7 September | Christian Formation
Class Begins |
| 13 September | Festival of Faith
Bladensburg, MD |
| 20 September | Summer Yard Sale |

New Brochure

A newly revised colored 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 notify 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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ECCE

The Newsletter of S. John the Baptist Anglican Church,
Marshall, Virginia
Issue 11 September 2008

Dear Family and Friends of S. John's,

Even though the Church has her own kalendar, parish life always seems to rub up against the ebb and flow of the secular life that surrounds us. Just as September marks a return to routine as we end our summer holidays and the schools start again in earnest, so in the parish September marks a renewed launch of our activities.

I want to encourage each of you to consider seriously joining our Christian Formation classes as we begin a new discussion in September. How many of us could offer a succinct understanding of our faith if asked? S. Peter, writing in his first epistle says: *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* This should be our personal goal.

We talk often about the need to grow our parish. I don't think that's the correct way to see the matter. As we grow individually in our relationship with God, and in our understanding of that relationship, the parish will grow as a consequence. As our acquaintances are attracted to God's love revealed by our actions and words, they will want to have what we have. Growth will be the result of our desire to love others as Our Lord so often demonstrates in the Gospels. It was, after all, this magnetic love, as well as the care for each other in the Early Church, that made the Church explode during the first several centuries, in spite of relentless persecution.

As I have mentioned before, Bishop Hewett has offered a vision to those of us in the Diocese of the Holy Cross to be like the Church of the First Millennium, the undivided Church of East and West. This means not only that we be unified within our own parish, not only that we adhere to the Faith of that undivided Church, not only that we embrace worship in the same spirit as they did, but that we live for each other and for those we meet daily. To serve even "the least of these my brethren" is to serve none other than Christ Himself.

Your friend and Pastor,

From the Deacon's Dais

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Mark 11:25-26

The Church Fathers tell us of a monk who went to his elder complaining of the way his fellow monk had been treating him and asking that the elder discipline him for his actions. The elder listened for a little while and then suggested that they conclude in prayer. As the elder led them in the Lord's Prayer, he prayed the words "and do not forgive us our trespasses, for we do not forgive the trespasses of others."

The world in which we live is full of potential to harm and disappoint us. Anyone who has made it through to the age of thirty has experienced enough wrongs at the hands of others to make simply keeping up with them a full-time job. The good news is that we don't have to – in fact, we're not supposed to. When we cannot, or worse, will not, release a past wrong it is we ourselves who remain trapped. Much of the fear, depression and anger that holds us back from living life fully has its roots in grievances we are not letting go.

Sometimes unforgiveness manifests itself in little things – in an aggrieved or superior attitude toward all of the irritations and bumps in the road others cause us. A coral plant by itself is small and breaks easily, but a giant reef made up of thousands of the same plant can wreck a giant ship. In the same way, piling up small grievances in our marriages, families, church life, or business dealings can have catastrophic effects. Most wrongs are small things (although we

don't always rightly see that), but sometimes the deepest challenges to forgiveness come as a part of our deepest disappointments. It is here that the Christian encounters one of the great tests on the path to the Celestial City. What do we do with wrongs that are so intentional, so harmful, and have such lifelong effects that we find it very difficult to forgive? Christians who have learned forgiveness in daily life may find themselves struggling to do something that they know they must do, and it is even more difficult when the one who has wronged us seems forever out of the reach of reconciliation through unrepentance or even death. Even then our obligation stands: Hieromonk Damascene says that "we can forgive even when reconciliation is delayed, or seems impossible. We can (and should) even forgive those with whom we will never be able to reconcile in this life."

How can we do this? How can we avoid being weighed down by the anchor of wrongs that we cannot let go? If our Lord's words above are to be taken seriously (and of course they are), then there is a sense in which our own forgiveness is hanging in the balance in this great challenge. But it is also in our own forgiveness that we find the key: forgiveness is not a project, an ambition, an achievement, or a technique that we learn. It is a new reality empowered by Christ from beginning to end. We cannot achieve the forgiveness of others any more than we can achieve our own forgiveness by God, and it is often when we are unable or unwilling to accept God's forgiveness that we also cannot forgive others. Our Lord thus speaks truth when He says that we will be judged by the standard by which we have judged others.

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Kudos

To Deacon John Needham for "holding down the fort" during my August holiday.

To Larry Knutsen and Dean Worcester for their negotiating skills in working with our landlord.

Transitus

On 30 August, a Requiem Mass was offered for the repose of the soul of Rose Siddell, Richard Muller's mother.

A Look at the Liturgy

For the past several months in this column, I've examined the connection between worship and architecture, noting how architectural forms either indicate, or even dictate, the manner of worship that takes place within that sacred space. I have argued that worship centered in the intellect primarily, if not singularly, is most often experienced within structures often associated with the colonial period in this country; a confluence of "Enlightenment" thinking and neo-classical design. Whereas, buildings with spacious interiors and soaring ceilings, suggesting a mysterious or transcendent quality, engage the worshipper's imagination as well as his intellect.

Having just returned from a holiday in England, I couldn't help but return to this theme. While visiting the Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham during Assumption-tide, I reflected on its significant history. The ancient monastic foundations that once marked the landscape around Walsingham were constructed along Gothic principles. Not only did this style reflect the most current construction methods available, it also suggested something of the wealth held by the Franciscan and Augustinian religious communities. It was no mystery then that Henry VIII, who had himself gone to Walsingham on pilgrimage to petition the Blessed Mother to intercede on his behalf for a male heir, later "with greed in his eyes," as the Walsingham Hymn says, sacked these foundations in his unquenchable thirst for the financial resources necessary to fund his monarchical enterprise.

The eradication of religious foundations would lead eventually, under his son Edward VI, to the removal from cathedrals and other major churches of any interior decoration that evoked the transcendent in worship. Once magnificent apsidal frescos and dazzling stained glass windows were destroyed and replaced with white-wash and clear glass. The Age of Enlightenment swept aside in one iconoclastic gesture centuries of spiritual offerings of pious craftsmen.

I give thanks for the thoughtful decoration carried out on the reredos and chancel of our humble church. One gets the impression of timeless worship and I must confess that the altar was one of the things that drew me to S. John the Baptist. It is right that our hearts and minds should be drawn away from the present into the Infinite as the Mass is celebrated. For what is the Mass if not an opening in the heavens itself, and a joining in the unending self-oblation of the Son to the Father.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Christian Formation: Sundays, 9:30am

Beginning Sunday, 7 September, we will examine the ancient Creeds of the Church to get a greater understanding of our faith. This class is strongly recommended for all who are new to the parish and for those 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*

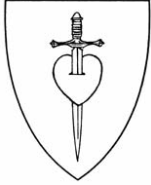












Festival of Faith: 13 September

S. Luke's Parish, 4002 53rd St, Bladensburg, Maryland is hosting a Festival of Faith entitled: **The Hope and Future of Orthodoxy in the Anglican Communion.** The conference will run from 8:30am through 5pm, with the Most Reverend Drexel Gomez (Archbishop of the West Indies) and the Rt Rev'd Keith Ackerman, SSC (Diocese of Quincy, Illinois) as the keynote speakers.

Summer Yard Sale: 20 Sept, 8am-1pm

Mark your calendars now for the Summer Yard Sale. Please collect your white elephants, unwanted furniture, clothes, artwork and so forth and bring these items to the church so they can be sorted and marked in advance of the sale. We could use your help on the day of the sale as well!

September 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 THE PIERCED HEART	1 <i>S. Giles, Ab</i>	2 <i>S. Stephen of Hungary, KC</i>	3 <i>S. Pius X, PC</i>	4 <i>Feria</i>	5  <i>Feria</i>	6 <i>Of Our Lady</i>
MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM
7  TRINITY XVI	8 <i>Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	9 <i>S. Peter Claver, C</i>	10 <i>S. Nicholas of Tolentino, C</i>	11 <i>Feria</i>	12  <i>Most Holy Name of Mary</i>	13 <i>Of Our Lady</i>
MORN. PRAYER 9AM SCF 9.30 MASS 10:30 AM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM
14  EXALTATION OF HOLY CROSS (TRINITY XVII)	15 <i>Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	16 <i>S. Cyprian of Carthage</i>	17 <i>Stigmata of S. Francis (Ember Day)</i>	18 <i>S. Joseph of Cupertino, C</i>	19  <i>S. Theodore of Tarsus, BC (Ember Day)</i>	20 <i>Vigil of S. Matthew, ApEv (Ember Day)</i>
MORN. PRAYER 9AM SCF 9.30 MASS 10:30 AM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM
21  S. MATTHEW, ApEv	22 <i>Feria</i>	23 <i>Feria</i>	24 <i>Our Lady of Ransom</i>	25 <i>Feria</i>	26  <i>Ss Martyrs of North America</i>	27 <i>Ss Cosmas and Damian, MM</i>
MORN. PRAYER 9AM SCF 9.30 MASS 10:30 AM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM
28  TRINITY XIX	29 <i>S. Michael and All Angels</i> LOW MASS 7PM	30 <i>S. Jerome, CD</i>	 MICHAELMAS	 S. MATTHEW	 S. JEROME	 PATIENCE AND SACRIFICE
MORN. PRAYER 9AM SCF 9.30 MASS 10:30 AM	MORN. PRAYER 9.30AM EVE. PRAYER 5.30PM					

Ab=Abbot; Abs= Abbess; 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

Continued from page ii

We ourselves draw from the well of God's forgiveness as we take our sins to him in repentance, as we hear of His forgiveness in the scriptures, as we experience it in Holy Communion, as we enter again into the reality of Christ "...who made there by his one oblation of himself once offered a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world..." We come to Christ in our helplessness and are forgiven. And it is here also that we enter in to forgiveness of those who have wronged us and move closer to the eternal reality of forgiving everyone, everything.

Letting the past go is one of the most freeing and energizing experiences of the Christian life. Like everything else Our Lord teaches us to do which seems difficult, or even impossible, it carries with it great promise. When we embrace forgiveness we open ourselves to peace, love, happiness, freedom, healing, and a renewed creative energy to reengage with a life we had given up on.

It is this sort of forgiveness that captures the attention of the world and makes Christianity attractive even to the most skeptical. Fr. George Calciu was kept in a Romanian communist prison for 16 years and subjected to the torturous scientific experimentation known as Pitesti, which was designed to completely dismantle the human personality. He also experienced profoundly the forgiveness of God as he came to Him in repentance, and as a result was filled with forgiveness for all others, including his tormentors. Hieromonk Damascene tells about meeting this extraordinary man shaped in the fires of great wrong and forgiveness: "Fr. George radiated a sense of otherworldly serenity and childlike joy. He even looked young, which was remarkable not only because of his age but because of [his years in prison]. Whenever he spoke of the tortures he had undergone, he smiled and even laughed. He had no hatred or resentment; he had forgiven, and was free."

The Rev'd Deacon Jeremy "Jay" Boccabello

ACW NEWS

It's YARD SALE time again! As you prepare your homes and gardens for the fall and you clear out garages, attics, and closets, please remember our Annual Yard Sale on 20 September. This is the biggest fund raiser we have each year and ask the involvement of the entire congregation. We need **your donations** -- clothes, furnitures, toys, treasures, books, CDs, kitchen items, decorations, bags, tools, jewelry, cosmetics, etc. (the list is endless) -- *as well as your participation* to make this a success. As we have nowhere to store items, please bring any donations to the Annex after Mass on 14th September. If you plan to bring them during the week, please phone ahead to be sure the church is open.

We will need volunteers during the week running up to the sale to help sort and price the items. We will also need as much help as possible on the day to work the cash register, help with customers, help set up, clean up, etc. If you have tables, gazebos, tents that we could use on the day in case of hot or inclement weather, please let me know so we can arrange to get them set up early the morning of the yard sale.

We also plan to raffle an autumnal basket so if you have items to donate for the basket, please bring to the church by 14 September so that we have time to put the basket together and get it on display.

If you have time to work on preparations for the yard sale the week before, either during the day or evening, please let me know by e-mail or telephone. Thanks very much. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

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