

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

When you receive this, we will already be deep into Holy Week.

On Tuesday, I joined my brother and sister priests and deacons at the Cathedral for what is known as the Mass of Collegiality. At this annual eucharist, we all renew or ordination vows, committing our lives to serve Christ and uphold each other.

One feature of this liturgy is that we process into the cathedral in order of ordination date (those ordained longest going in first). I noticed this year that I was smack dab in the middle of the procession. The ranks of those ordained in the 40s, 50s, and 60s are growing thinner, and few of them are now involved in fulltime ministry. The numbers of those ordained in the last 25 years are swelling while becoming more diverse. Those of us ordained in the 70s, 80s, and 90s are now the senior active clergy, and even many of us are facing retirement. For some reason, it felt like a changing of the guard.

But what struck me most was Bishop Dietsche's sermon as he reflected on his own ordination. He said he had come close to not going into ordained ministry at all, and that every day, he has to make the decision to do this ministry. Every day.

When he said this, I could see most of the 200+ heads nodding. Ordination may be forever, but ministry is a daily choice. Some days it's hard to make that choice. Some days, anything looks better.

And yet, whether it's Bishop Dietsche, any of my colleagues, or me, there is always something that compels us to choose - for one more day - to serve Christ in this capacity.

There are times I wonder why we have to constantly re-choose, why we can't just say, "I'm a priest, and that's that." Why can't it be easier?

But then I think, following Christ is a daily choice, isn't it? Every day, you and I have to wake up and decide, "I will follow today. I will live the life Jesus wants. I will love even the unlovable."

In a world like ours where there are constant pressures to put on our defenses, to look out for number one, go out and have fun till it kills us, to stand our ground, to win, to succeed... in a world like this, it is tremendously hard to make that decision to let go of power in favor of love.

Sometimes, we need to a renewal - like the clergy have on Holy Tuesday's Mass of Collegiality.

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Fortunately, we have it! It's called Easter! Because on Easter, we come together, we remind ourselves of God's great, self-giving love for us, of God's power of life over death, and of the promise that we are never alone. We get to stand up and renew our vows made at Baptism - to support and uphold each other in our own unique ministries.

So this Easter, join your fellow Brothers and Sisters in Christ not only to celebrate the resurrection but to remind yourself why you have chosen to follow Christ today. And tomorrow. Day by day.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck+

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Holy Week And Easter At St. James'

Thursday, March 24 - Maundy Thursday

7:00 PM

Maundy Thursday Liturgy with Stripping of Altar

Friday, March 25 - Good Friday

10:30 AM

Community Walk of the Cross,
beginning at Regina Coeli Church

7:00 PM

Good Friday Liturgy with Veneration of the Cross

Saturday, March 26 - Holy Saturday

8:00 PM

Easter Vigil with New Fire and
First Communion of Easter

EASTER SUNDAY! March 27

8:00 AM

Easter Communion with Music

10:00 AM

Easter Communion with Music
Easter Egg Hunt for kids follows

St. James' Episcopal Church
4526 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, NY 12538
845-229-2820
www.stjameshydepark.org

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

The News of the Church

Sunday School News:

Sunday March 27th: No Sunday School - Happy Easter

April 3rd: Sunday School resumes for Bright Sunday.

Join the Churchyard Committee! Our churchyard committee wants you. The committee oversees one of the most historic graveyards in the region, and is responsible for making sure it is kept up. It handles the sale and digging of graves as well. If you value our churchyard and want it to continue to be a source of comfort whose loved ones rest here as well as historical interest to those who visit, please join our committee. If you're interested, you can contact Carol Vinall at vinehall3@aol.com.

Help Liberty Station: Following a period of exploration and discussion with Jocelyn, a staff member at Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), the Outreach Committee made the commitment to support Liberty Station and the work of SSVF.

Some background: SSVF is under the umbrella of Hudson River Housing. Their goal is "to promote housing stability among very low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing."

We have too many homeless and/or at-risk Veterans in Dutchess County. SSVF is there to provide needed services to these Veterans. For Veterans who find themselves homeless, Liberty Station, provides housing, various services and hope.

Thomas Moody, a US Army Veteran, says it best - "When I got back to Poughkeepsie, I probably spend a couple of weeks living out of my truck and it was just one of those things. I didn't want to be a burden . . . I have a lot of family here but I'm also a very prideful person so I thought it was important to me to try and work this out myself. And with the help of SSVF I was able to do that. It was very quick. I believe I was in Liberty Station the following day. I've been serving as the superintendent for the past seven months."

If you haven't picked up your Lenten calendar, please do so. This year's calendar is a prayer calendar reflecting the challenges our Veterans and active service personnel encounter.

Check out our Liberty Station table as you enter the Parish Hall for breakfast. There will be copies listing the needs for Liberty Station and SSVF. There will be a basket to receive your

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

donations. In addition, we will have a video showing Tussing Elementary School of Virginia singing - THANK YOU - Soldiers.

Our support of Liberty Station and SSVF is ongoing with support continuing throughout the year. Please prayerful consider supporting our Veterans.

Thank you - St. James' Outreach Committee

A Men's Retreat:

Although we do not normally advertise events for other organizations, this retreat may be of interest to some. The minister running it, the Rev. Randy Prentiss, is pastor at Arlington Reformed and retreat director at the Taconic Retreat Center (where our youth have gone to the Bridge Builders Camp). Here is what he says:

MID-HUDSON MEN'S RETREAT

April 8-9.

26 hours of RENEWAL

Get closer to God; get closer to each other.

What is this?

An opportunity to get away with other guys for rest, renewal and retreat. We will do this through worshipping, laughing, playing, learning, talking, being away and being together.

Why?

Guys need a break. Guys need to get away. Guys need God. Guys need each other. Its' a good thing.

When?

Friday April 8, 6pm, thru Saturday April 9, 8 pm.

Where?

Taconic Retreat Center at intersection of Taconic Parkway and Rte 199, Red Hook.

30 minutes from Poughkeepsie. 45 minutes from Hopewell Junction. www.taconicrcc.net for info and directions.

Who?

A group of guys from a variety of local churches are putting this together, for...

All men 19 and older...

We hope that a group of guys from a variety of local churches will come and have a great time.

COST: \$115 includes 4 meals and 26 hours at camp. Climbing Tower and zip line additional cost (optional).

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

For the first time in a long time, many men from around the Hudson Valley will get together at the TACONIC RETREAT CENTER. We will be away for 26 hours to think about the things that are really important in our lives – our families, jobs, relationships, and God. Join us to reflect upon what's really important in our lives, and to have some fun.

This retreat offers a chance to bring focus to our lives and our faith. We will worship, laugh, rest, listen, learn, play (basketball, ultimate Frisbee, football, kan jam, and whatever you bring) and get to know each other. We are limiting our time to 26 hours so even busy guys with families can pull away to join us.

Pledge Envelopes: If you pledged but have not yet received your pledge envelopes, you can do so on Sunday. You can also pick up your 2015 statement of giving (helpful for taxes).

PLEASE PLEDGE! If you have pledged for 2016, thank you! If you have not yet pledged, it's not too late. We would like 100% participation this year in pledging, no matter the amount.

The News of the Diocese

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Please pray for these diocesan ministries this week. If you want to check out the entire year's calendar for intercession, it's simple to find - go to <http://www.diocesen.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

March

- 27 Easter Sunday - The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine
- 28 Trinity St. Paul's Church, New Rochelle
- 29 Diocesan Congregational Development Commission
- 30 The Parish of Christ the Redeemer, Pelham
- 31 Church of the Resurrection, Manhattan

April

- 1 Christ's Church, Rye
- 2 The House of the Redeemer, Manhattan

Praying For Peace Everywhere:

Let us continue to light a candle for peace in the Holy Land - and everywhere. Prayer is our most potent antidote to hatred.

1. **Candle for Peace**

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Please also light a candle on Fridays - holy to both faiths - for Peace

Let us Light Candles for Peace

Two mothers, one plea:

Now, more than ever, during these days of so much crying,
on the day that is sacred to both our religions, Friday, Sabbath Eve

Let us light a candle in every home - for peace:

A candle to illuminate our future, face to face,

A candle across borders, beyond fear.

From our family homes and houses of worship

Let us light each other up,

Let these candles be a lighthouse to our spirit

Until we all arrive at the sanctuary of peace.

2. **The Mothers Prayer:**

God of Life:

You who heals the broken hearted, binding up our wounds.

Please hear this prayer of mothers.

You did not create us to kill each other

Nor to live in fear or rage or hatred in your world. You created us so that we allow each other
to sustain Your Name in this world:

Your name is Life, your name is Peace.

For these I weep, my eye sheds water:

For our children crying in the night,

For parents holding infants, despair and darkness in their hearts.

For a gate that is closing – who will rise to open it before the day is gone?

With my tears and with my constant prayers, With the tears of all women deeply pained at
these harsh times

I raise my hands to you in supplication: Please God have mercy on us.

Hear our voice that we not despair That we will witness life with each other, That we have
mercy one for another, That we share sorrow one with the other, That we hope, together, one
for another.

Inscribe our lives in the book of Life

For Your sake, our God of Life Let us choose Life.

For You are Peace, Your world is Peace and all that is Yours is Peace,

May this be your will

And let us say Amen.

Sheikha Ibtisam Mahameed and Rabba Tamar Elad-Appelbaum
English Translation Amichai Lau-Lavie

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Susie Buhalis, Mariel Carter, Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Barbara Knakal, Ashley Konym, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Charles Pardee (husband of Sally), Clifford Plass, Gerald Plass, Grace Plass, Linda Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson (brother of Mary Gabel), John Ross, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Beatrice, grandmother of Angela Henry. Please also pray for Vanessa Grace.

Schedules

A Note about Schedules: The names you see below are those listed on their respective schedules. There are often times when, due to sickness or travel, substitutes are asked to fill in or trade positions. This will probably NOT be reflected in the lists below—so, if there is an inconsistency between what you see here and what you see on Sunday, that is alright.

Birthdays
(this past week): Jack Kinne; Joann B. Clark; Leighann Ciferri; Douglas Belding

Birthdays
(next week): Kathleen Craft; Susan McGlynn; Susan Heupler; Carol Vinall

Acolytes:
March 27: Nancy, Kirstin and Deirdre Mae
April 3: Russell, John Beyer and Anna

Altar Guild:
March 27: TBA
April 3: Team Number I

8 a.m. Readers:
March 27: Angela Henry and Lynne Koch
April 3: Debbie Belding and Grant Ferris

10 a.m. Readers:
March 27: Donna Beyer and Andy Hall
April 3: TBA

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

Ushers:	March 27: Donna and John Beyer April 3: Dean Caswell and Austin Horne
Pledge Clerks:	March 27: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher April 3: TBA
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	March 27: Carl and Jean Needy; Joan & Bud Oetjen April 3: Don, Lucille, Rachel and Daniel Ogden; Paul, Bev, Skye, Tadgh and Gilbert O'Halloran
Coffee Hour Hosts:	March 27: The Congregation April 3: TBA

This Week's Lectionary

Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12

NOTE: Audio recordings of some sermons are now available on St. James' website, www.stjameshydepark.org Look under "Worship"

Sermon Preached on
Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday)
(March 20, 2016)

"They Know Not"

Last week, the House of Bishops had its annual meeting, and it did something slightly unusual. It issued a letter to the whole church about the political state of the nation. I will read it now: "On Good Friday the ruling political forces of the day tortured and executed an innocent man. They sacrificed the weak and the blameless to protect their own status and power. On the third day Jesus was raised from the dead, revealing not only their injustice but also unmasking the lie that might makes right.

In a country still living under the shadow of the lynching tree, we are troubled by the violent forces being released by this season's political rhetoric. Americans are turning against their neighbors, particularly those on the margins of society. They seek to secure their own safety and

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

security at the expense of others. There is legitimate reason to fear where this rhetoric and the actions arising from it might take us.

In this moment, we resemble God's children wandering in the wilderness. We, like they, are struggling to find our way. They turned from following God and worshiped a golden calf constructed from their own wealth. The current rhetoric is leading us to construct a modern false idol out of power and privilege. We reject the idolatrous notion that we can ensure the safety of some by sacrificing the hopes of others. No matter where we fall on the political spectrum, we must respect the dignity of every human being and we must seek the common good above all else.

We call for prayer for our country that a spirit of reconciliation will prevail and we will not betray our true selves."

The letter has received some criticism for being political, but it speaks to a legitimate fear I have heard voiced on all ends of the political spectrum that something different and frightening is happening. Republican, Democratic, and Independent friends have voiced concern of a breakdown in social order.

However, I think they missed an opportunity with their comparison of today to the Hebrews wandering in the wilderness. For my money, a more apt comparison would have been with those Jerusalemites in today's gospel.

I think this letter has a place in the sermon today - especially today - because it gives us a good feel for what the atmosphere was like during that first Holy Week.

Things were tense, ready to explode, confusing.

People were excited about one thing then another. Loving one moment, raging the next. They greeted Jesus as a savior one moment, then shouted for his death the next.

We ought to be able to relate - nobody knew what they were doing, and many were lashing out violently when it might not have been in their nature typically. Or at least, they didn't know it was in their nature .

They - like us - did not know what they did.

Times like this - where we don't know what we're doing - are more common than we want to admit. I remember when I was 18 and an exchange student in West Berlin, my science teacher told us a story about when she was a teenager. It was in the waning days of World War II, and Josef Goebels was giving his infamous "Total War" speech at the Olympic Stadium. All the youth were required to be there, so she was there, of course. And she said Goebels had the crowd worked up into such a frenzy that when he shouted, "Do you want total war?" - which everyone knew would mean annihilation - they all screamed, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" It was only afterward, when she was walking home alone, that she burst into tears with the realization of what they had done.

We do not know what we are doing.

It's frightening - groups blame each other for increasingly escalating acts of violence, and there have even been promises of riots, depending on how the primaries go. It was no less frightening back then, only the one causing the stir was Jesus with his message of forgiveness, love, care for

St. James' E-pistle

March 25, 2016

the poor and the stranger, and his critique of the rich and powerful. His entry into Jerusalem, as innocuous as it seems to us, set every leader on edge because they feared he would cause a revolution and destroy their way of life.

People truly did not know what to do, and it was not difficult to turn them from adulation to murder. No wonder Jesus said from the cross, "Forgive them, Father, for they do not know what they are doing."

Do WE know what we are doing in this strange world? We would do well to ask ourselves if we are also caught up in the fray, if we are also those who shout for blood.

This day is the day of all when we acknowledge that we so easily turn from God's ways in the face of human temptations, whether they be fear, jealousy, rage.

Sometimes it feels hopeless now - as it did then.

But we have an advantage. Unlike them, we know in whom we may hope. We don't know what this tense time will bring, but we can trust that the one whom all had supposed had been destroyed did in fact rise from death. And so, we trust we will not be destroyed forever. We believe that in following his path of reconciliation, of caring for and respecting the dignity of every human being, we will bring life where it seems desolate.

We can trust that the one we follow will - in the end - lead to life for all who are willing to follow his lead.

So, it may well be true that we know not what we are doing these days. But we thank God that the one we follow, Jesus Christ, does. Amen.