

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

Next Friday, I am giving a lecture for the Bard College Lifelong Learning Center. The topic is the Millennial generation and Religion - and whether they have a future together. For the record, a Millennial is a young adult born somewhere between the years of 1982 and 2000. They are now between the ages of 15 and 33. (These dates vary, depending on whose scale you use, but they're close enough).

In all my time as a priest, I have worked with youth to some degree or other. It is one of the most enjoyable (if stressful) parts of my vocation. There has never been a time in 25 years of ministry where I shook my head and fretted about "kids these days."

That doesn't mean that I haven't had heartbreak and anguish over them. I have visited them in hospitals and psychiatric centers. Some got pregnant before graduating high school. One was murdered.

And then, of course, there is the usual drama. Too many classes, too many sports, too many hormones flying every which way. Kids not getting along and kids falling in love. Kids just slipping off the radar and disappearing.

But overwhelmingly, my experience has been joy. Even though the first youth groups I worked with were Generation Xers, the majority have been Millennials. They display wisdom, intelligence, kindness, generosity and patience in levels I can only marvel at.

And many of those youth are now marrying, having kids of their own, and starting professions. I can't tell you how much my heart soars seeing some kid all grown up and long gone - come back to the church with their family so I can meet them.

Back to the lecture next week. What do we say about Millennials and their religion? Well, by the numbers, there are a lot of them, but there aren't as many of them going to church.

Why?

That is the \$64 million question. There have been a lot of studies and countless articles. Reasons for avoiding church may include: boredom with ritual (but this is rebutted by many Millennials), being tired of the hypocrisy they see, not liking the rigidity they experience, and not believing in God (because they keep hearing that science and religion are incompatible).

These are certainly factors.

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

So to is a unique feature of this generation: They seem not to be joiners. They pay attention to politics but are avoiding political parties. They volunteer but don't become Rotarians or Shriners or Elks. They think about God, are spiritual, but don't see any need to be part of a church. And if you try telling them that God will be angry if they don't go to church every week, that will only drive them away.

I write all of this as if Millennials were a homogenous group. They are not. They are - as are members of all generational groups - unique individuals as varied as the leaves of a tree. What they have in common is age and common experiences (for half of them, the world has always been a post-9/11 place, and even the oldest of them were kids at the time).

I bring all this up because this lecture has forced me to look to the future of the church. Will we exist in 20 years? Will anyone worship? Or will we be a mere echo of the voices that once were raised to praise God?

I am hopeful. My experience of young adults is that they want what God has to offer. Many want God's love and grace, and they ask the questions - if only we hear them. What's more, God's existence and love for us never depended on our believing in God. The only thing that depends on it is our joy. So share Christ's love with a young adult today. It'll make a difference to them. And probably to you.

In Christ,

Chuck+

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

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.diocesenyny.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

April

- 25 On the feast day for Saint Mark the Evangelist, we pray that we too might be faithful evangelists.
- 26 Diocesan Chaplaincies to Prisons and Jails
- 27 Trinity School, Manhattan
- 28 St. Stephen's Church, Staten Island
- 29 The Adults and Children in Trust Program, Manhattan
- 30 The Episcopal Church Center

May

- 1 On the feast day for Saint Philip and Saint James we pray that we might grow in our discipleship and our willingness to disciple others.

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

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.

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

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

The News of the Church

HABITAT FAITH BUILD - 125 Garden Street, Poughkeepsie: The Outreach Committee gives all who participated in our Lenten Calendar Project in 2014 and again this year a huge THANK YOU!!! We raised over \$1200 enabling our parish family to fulfill our pledge. Please join the Celebration and Blessing of the Habitat Faith Build House: Thursday, May 7 at 5:30 pm at 125 Garden Street in Poughkeepsie.

Sunday, May 10th is Episcopal Charities Sunday. Episcopal Charities is the mission arm of our Diocese. Leading up to May 10th, we will have the opportunity to learn about the work of Episcopal Charities and how we can support its work.

Pilgrimage Volunteers NEEDED: I am looking for a planning committee for the Spring Rail Trail Pilgrimage. It will take place the weekend of May 30-31 - the week after Pentecost. I especially need volunteers for registration, finances, and PR. If you would like to be a part of making our third pilgrimage the best yet, please contact me as soon as possible! Thanks, Fr. Chuck

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

Boy Scout Breakfast: Troop 80 will be preparing a breakfast on Saturday, May 2nd, from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m. Please see the flier at the end of this E-pistle for more details.

Video of Bright Sunday: If you wish to see a recording of the Bright Sunday Service (“A Desert Home Companion”), you can use the following YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6SvEtqO-5Q> Including close-ups of the various participants, this is a revised (and better) upload relative to the original.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Susie Buhalis, Jim And Sharyn Burke, Joann Clark, Michael Day, Dottie Drake, Ross Eames, Jr., Linkin Ewalt, Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Jane Gagliardoto, Gloria Golden, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Barbara Knakal, Ashley Konyn, 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, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Debbie Stone, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

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): Steven Gausepohl, Zachary Whitman, Floraine Knauss and Rachel Ogden

Birthdays
(next week): Hope Jennings, Barbara Wells and Jeet Shahani

Acolytes:
April 26: Bryanna Burkhardt, Chris Granados-Kramer and Amelia McNamara

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

	May 3: Jasmine Thatcher, Jaylen Thatcher and Charlie Urban-Mead
Altar Guild:	April 26: Team Number II May 3: Team Number II
8 a.m. Readers:	April 26: Angela Henry and Lucille Ogden May 3: Debbie Belding and Lynne Koch
10 a.m. Readers:	April 26: Donna Beyer/Nancy Montero May 3: Russell Urban-Mead/Andy Hall
Ushers:	April 26: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher May 3: Andrew and Tonya Hall
Pledge Clerks:	April 26: Paul Littlefield and Dean Caswell May 3: Janet Bright and Joanne Lown
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	April 26: John Robinson, Hank and Jackie Schroeder and Rick, Susan, Christian and Brooke Schroeder May 3: Susan Schryver, John and Laura Seagren and Richard Secor
Coffee Hour Hosts:	April 26: Saira Shahani, Bobbie Wells and Anna Marie Pitcher May 3: Audrey Horne, Judy Douglas and Wilma Tully

This Week's Lectionary

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

1 John 3:16-24

John 10:11-18

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

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

Sermon Preached on Third Sunday of Easter (April 19, 2015)

"Behaving Like Children"

Remember that old Robin Williams movie, "Hook"? He plays Peter Pan who has grown up after all and became a heartless corporate lawyer. On a trip one day with his family, his son is bouncing a ball in the airplane. Peter says, "Quit acting like a child!"

His son says, "I am a child."

My experience is that getting older doesn't necessarily change things much. Last night, we had a sleepover with the youth group. We had a little campfire in the backyard (after fire warning had expired), and the kids discovered our hammock. So there they were playing "how many teens can we pile onto the hammock" and screaming at the top of their lungs while others swung them in it almost to the point of tipping.

Sigh.

Even adulthood doesn't seem to inoculate some people against childish behavior. I distinctly remember the day when I was in high school, and my mother sneaking into the kitchen with a 70s version of a super soaker. She saw my dad at the sink and started blasting away. He was ready for her and shot back with the sink sprayer - and we had a full-blown water fight on our hands with laughing and screaming and no regard for the damage they were doing to their own kitchen.

You see, we often assume that behaving like a child is a negative. Should outgrow it. Immature, irresponsible, self-centered, goofy, not thinking things through...

And indeed, behaving like children does mean a certain level of ignorance & requires some growing up ... like in Acts. We do indeed learn & mature. (As we mature, for example, we outgrow Santa - but if we're lucky, we don't outgrow the sense of wonder & joy at miracles. Just understanding the difference between miracle & magic. Difference between God & blind faith, is part of growing & maturing).

Acting like children means often refusing to see what's in front of your face. Jesus was right there, but they could not see it because they refused to believe the evidence. Growing up means learning how to trust the evidence.

So acting like children means learning a lot.

And they do it naturally. Even when they proclaim a distaste for school, they are learning from infancy onwards. In Baptism classes, I remind parents that their children are always watching

St. James' E-pistle

April 24, 2015

parents - & emulating them. (Old anti-smoking ad of 60s... Going to church for self... Generosity of money and talent and spirit... For family and for strangers, for rich and especially for poor.). So, it seems like there's a lot in acting like children designed to leave childhood behind.

But not entirely.

Because behaving like children ALSO means behaving like heirs. It means Knowing you're good. Knowing you belong. Knowing a Level of comfort that has nothing to do with anything other than you are part of the family. (Like a lion cub that can chew on the lion - which no other living creature would dare).

In this natural nobility (as it were), there is an innate generosity of spirit.

There is a natural embracing of uncertainty & mystery (we don't know what we will be, & that's okay). Not worried about what we'll be - just are ...right now. There is a natural sense of wonder. We don't ever want to lose that.

For us then,

Feel comfort

Desire to please & help

Emulate (feeding, healing, standing up for least of these...)

Goofiness & play - because God loves that, too...

So behave like children. Because we are. We're God's children.

Amen.



BSA Troop 80 Hyde Park, NY



A hearty fresh cooked breakfast!

Your choice of:

**Pancakes ~ Scrambled Eggs ~ Sausage or Bacon ~ Hash browns ~ Orange juice
Coffee or Tea**

**Where: St. James Church
Rt. 9 Hyde Park**

When: Saturday, May 2, 2015

Time: 8:00 am – 11:00 am

**Cost: \$8.00 per adult ticket
\$6.00 per child ticket**

**Please come out to support the scouts working their way to
Philmont Scout Ranch!**

