

St. James' E-pistle

May 16, 2014

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

This Saturday is full of meaning for us. We consecrate a new bishop (yes, and have a tag sale and a concert as well).

Why is a bishop important to us? More than you might think, I hear questions about what good a bishop is. Or why we need a diocese, just one more layer of bureaucracy. Just one more example of hierarchy contributing nothing to our daily lives.

Granted, in a large diocese like ours, it's not easy to spend much time with the bishop. We get an official visit once every two years for confirmations, and that seems to be it.

If that were all there was to it, however, I probably wouldn't be a priest in the church. Who knows, maybe I wouldn't even be an Episcopalian.

The thing is, I value the diocesan structure and the relationship we have not only with our bishop but with the other churches in the diocese, and by extension with the worldwide Anglican Communion.

It is important to me that we hand down a tradition, not just whatever some charismatic leader decides. It is important that our local congregation has a broader reach because we are bound together with others. It is important whether I travel across the county or across the world, I will have worship that is known.

Those are just a few reasons I love being part of a church that binds us together without requiring uniformity. And I love that when one of our parishioners moves away, they are still a part of us. Just this week, Rebecca Mungo returned to the Mid-Hudson Valley for her sister's wedding. We had a chance to share a cup of coffee and to catch up. No matter where we are in the world, we are still bound together.

One other thing I love about our church is that it reminds us that we are part of a very big world, bound together not only by the bonds of our common faith but by the bonds of humanity. When girls in Nigeria are kidnapped, it affects me. When miners in Turkey are buried alive, I grieve, too.

I encourage you to be part of this consecration. Even if you can't actually attend, you can pray. So pray for Bishop-elect Shin, pray for the Diocese of New York, pray for the Episcopal Church - and pray for all humanity near and far, for we are all one.

In Christ,

Chuck+

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The News of the Diocese

Prayers for Nigerian Terror Victims: Please consider using this prayer in your daily devotions as you remember the more than 200 girls kidnapped in Nigeria by the terrorist group Boko Haram. While it is true that there are millions in equally desperate situations and facing equally unjust treatment, focusing on one specific case of injustice and evil may help us remember all who suffer similarly. (This prayer comes by way of the Rev. Steve Holton for the Episcopal Muslim Relations Committee).

Prayer for the kidnapped Nigerian girls May 2014

O God, we cry out to you
for the lives and the freedom
of the 276 kidnapped girls in Nigeria.
In their time of danger and fear,
pour out your strong Spirit for them.
Make a way home for them in safety.
Make a way back for them
to the education that will lift them up.
Hold them in the knowledge
that they are not captive slaves,
they are not purchased brides,
but they are your beloved daughters,
and precious in your sight.
Change the hearts and minds of their kidnapers
and of all who choose violence against women and girls.
Cast down the mighty from their seat,
and lift up the humble and meek,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Consecration: Please keep in your prayers Bishop-elect Alan K. Shin as he is consecrated this Saturday (May 17) as our next Bishop suffragan. Pray also for our parish representatives who will take part in the consecration. If you would like to attend you can simply travel to the cathedral on your own. A bus is being organized through Christ Church, Poughkeepsie, and you may be able to purchase a seat on that bus (\$60 including round trip and a lunch at a NYC restaurant). If anyone wants to carpool, that may also be possible.

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Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: We have been asked if we can publish the names of the churches of the diocese that we pray for in church each Sunday. We're happy to do so. 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." Here are the diocesan intercessions for the week of May 18-24:

- 18 Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling
- 19 Grace Church School, Manhattan
- 20 The Sisters of St. Margaret
- 21 The Diocesan Christian Formation Committee
- 22 Work and ministries at Amsterdam House, Manhattan
- 23 The Episcopal Schools of the Diocese
- 24 The youth of the diocese and those who work in youth ministries

Children's Community Chorus: St. Margaret's Church in Staatsburg is inviting all children between the ages of 8 and 13 to join their free, non-denominational Children's Community Chorus. St. Margaret's received a grant to form this group which is not only a singing group but a class intent on teaching all children how to read music. The idea is for the chorus to sing at various community concerts as well as once a month during St. Margaret's worship. If you would like more information, please call Fr. Allan Ford at 914-299-3148 or leave a message at 845-889-4181.

The News of the Church

Tag Sale: On **Saturday, May 17**, St. James' is having a tag sale to coordinate with the town-wide tag sale. It is an important fundraiser for the ministries of the church. If you are not going to the consecration, please consider coming to the tag sale.

Wanted: New Acolytes: As the school year draws to an end, we will say goodbye to our graduating acolytes (and wish them luck in college!). This opens up a couple of spots on the acolyte list, and we want you! New acolytes need to be at least 9 years old and willing to be trained. Please see me (Fr. Chuck).

Rosary Workshop - Thursday, May 29 at 7:00 PM: At the request of several parishioners, I have designed a workshop on how to make and pray with an Anglican Rosary. You may find this helpful and inspiring yourself. This one-time workshop will take place on Thursday, May 29 starting at 7:00 PM. If we find we need more time, we can plan an

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extra session. Once you register, I will send you an information sheet so you can prepare better.

Graveyard Tour Committee Forming: Believe it or not, it's time to start planning this year's Graveyard Tours. Already we're working on which "characters" we will visit. There are some exciting new options. Please let me (Fr. Chuck) know if you are interested in being on the planning committee. We will plan our first meeting for some time this month.

Book to be published this month: Later this month, the Hudson Valley News will publish a book of Fr. Chuck's Columns from his weekly "God, Life, and Everything" column. The cost is still to be determined, but we'll make it known as soon as it's available. If you want to reserve a copy, please e-mail Fr. Chuck.

Gluten Free Communion: For those who have gluten allergies, St. James' now has Gluten Free communion hosts. Simply let me know either before the service or at the time of communion, and I'll be sure to give you one.

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Outreach—Rural and Migrant Ministry Walkathon: On Saturday, June 7th, at 10 AM, there will be a Walkathon in support of the Rural and Migrant Ministry. The Walkathon will be followed by a BBQ luncheon prepared and served by the Culinary Christian Fellowship of the CIA. The Walkathon begins and ends at St. James', and the walk consists of a 3 mile loop through the Vanderbilt Estate. Registration is from 10-11 AM at St. James, with a \$20 fee for adults (walk plus lunch or lunch only) and \$10 for children (walk plus lunch or lunch only). A flier is attached at the end of this E-pistle.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Kathleen Craft, Michael Day, Jane Gagliardoto, Kasey Gaulin, John Golden, Jack Gordy, Andy Hall, Harold Hall, Brooke Helton, Rev. Don Hoyer, Dalton K., Barbara Knakal, Rosemary Leuken, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Clifford Plass, Gerald Plass, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, John Schroeder, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Debbie Stone, The Right Reverend E. Don Taylor, Gloria Veach, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way and Cliff Wells.

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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:	Erika Seagren, Rebecca Gausepohl, Isabelle Vogeler, Walter Koch, David Webb and Robin Bohlmann
Acolytes:	May 18: Gage Minter, Jasmine Thatcher and Charlie Urban-Mead May 25: Mike Minter, Nancy Montero and Skye O'Halloran
Altar Guild:	May 18: Team III May 25: Team I
8 a.m. Readers:	May 18: Debbie Belding and Sue DeLorenzo May 25: Angela Henry and Lynne Koch
10 a.m. Readers:	May 18: Russell Urban-Mead/Judy Douglass May 25: Donna Beyer/Deirdre Mae Micker
Ushers:	May 18: Bill and Regina Ardini May 25: Nancy Montero and Anna Marie Pitcher
Pledge Clerks:	May 18: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher May 25: Paul Littlefield and Dean Caswell
Coffee Hour Hosts:	May 18: The Gausepohls, Deirdre Mae Micker and Leslie Quick May 25: Deb and Doug Belding

This Week's Lectionary

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

1 Peter 2:2-10

John 14:1-14

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

Sermon Preached on Fourth Sunday of Easter (May 11, 2014)

"Multitasking"

Mothers are known to do it all, sometimes at the same time. Virtually every card at the store tells you so. And so does experience. Cooking, cleaning, earning, teaching, coaching, fixing broken pipes, fixing broken kids, breaking up fights, comforting the broken-hearted, recording family history..... We should acknowledge also that often they are doing it on their own - the majority of single-parent households are run by mothers.

(To be fair, when we get to Fathers Days next month, we'll say many of the same things because parenthood is evolving into a partnership where tasks are less easily defined by gender. Each will always have its unique role, however.)

Nevertheless, mothers are natural multi-taskers.

Jesus, as it turns out, was a multi-tasker, too. Not in the same way, to be sure, but in truly unique and wondrous ways. I mean, he fed people, healed, taught, absolved and raised people from the dead... Right?

All that's true. But today's lessons put it differently, or highlighted different tasks.

Let's start by noting that in Easter, and at nearly every Eucharist, we proclaim Christ to be the Lamb of God, right?

But we also know Christ as the shepherd. In our gospel, Jesus says, "The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers."

He says it outright just one verse after today's passage: in verse 11, he says, "I am the good shepherd."

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And in today's epistle, Peter says, "For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls."

So Jesus is the Sheep, and he's the Shepherd.

And to confuse things, today's passage tells us he is also the gate.

In verse 7 he says, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep."

Sheep, shepherd, sheep gate? Which is it?

Of course, it's all. Jesus is the one who offers his life for us, lays himself down without struggle to show and make real his love for us. He is the one who leads us like lost sheep from death to life, from mere existence to abundant life in our spirits. And like a shepherd, he is the one who will not give up until he finds us. At the same time, he is the gate through which we go in our journey home. We enter the Kingdom of God through Christ.

This is great - we knew Christ had multi-tasking down. But Jesus does not allow us to merely stand back and admire his handiwork. No more than your mother allowed you to just stand back and watch her do it all. If you're going to be part of the family, you're going to learn some multi-tasking of your own. So the other lessons today point us in the direction of our tasks.

Back to Peter's epistle, he tells us that we are to follow Christ's example in suffering in persecution. Granted, Peter was talking to people who really were being arrested and killed for their beliefs, and we rarely have to face anything like that in our relatively safe condition here. But you might suffer for the Gospel anyway. Even if people don't persecute you for simply being a Christian, you might suffer because of your faith. If you see injustice and decide to act against it, say by protesting or drawing the world's attention to it.

And yes, many around the world do suffer for their faith - and we never know if we may someday be called upon to do so as well.

Yet suffering is not our primary task. Our reading from Acts shows how the disciples met regularly, how they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. So, learning/teaching, meeting together, sharing communion, and praying. Those were their tasks.

They are our tasks, too. Fundamental tasks. Because without them, without learning and teaching, without coming together regularly, with sharing the body and blood of Christ, without praying - really praying together, we have no understanding of who we are or why we should do anything more - like feeding the hungry, or seeking justice for the oppressed. We become weak and irrelevant even to ourselves.

If we neglect those tasks, we are not doing our jobs, and we begin to lose our identity as children of God, as followers of our shepherd. But if we pay attention to them, then we will hear the voice of our shepherd and follow even to places we are afraid to go and do things we

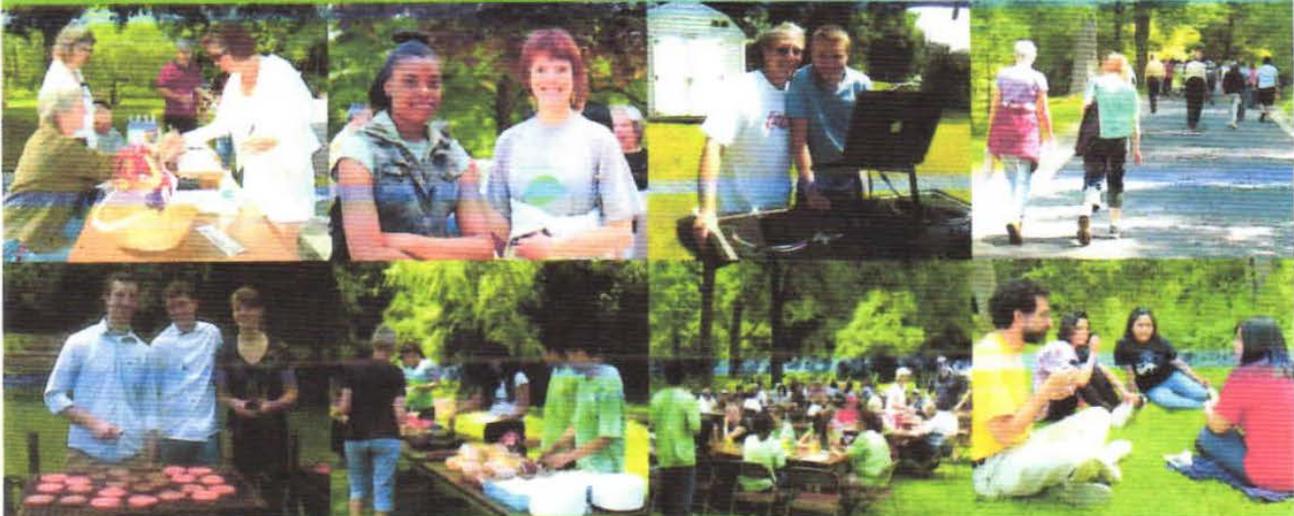
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never knew we could. If we go through the gate, we will see the path God lays before us. If we internalize the lessons of the apostles, we will know how to be church. If we meet together in fellowship, we will support and encourage each other. If we break bread together, we will share Christ's presence. If we pray together, the world will know its effect.

In essence, everybody is called to be a multi-tasker. At least in the sense that there are many tasks, and if we don't do them, who will? Mom? Sure, she's called to that. But she's not alone. These are tasks for everyone. Amen.

WALKATHON 2014



JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF
SUMMER OVERNIGHT CAMP!

**RAIN OR SHINE!
WE WILL WALK!**

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 2014, 10 AM

FOLLOWED BY A LUNCHEON

prepared and served by Culinary Christian Fellowship of the CIA

Beginning and ending at ST. JAMES CHURCH
4526 Albany Post Rd (Rte. 9), Hyde Park, NY 12538

Walking route: Vanderbilt Loop (3 miles)

Registration: 10-11am at St. James Church
\$20 Adult Registration Fee for Walkers includes Lunch
\$10 Children's Registration Fee

BBQ Luncheon ONLY: \$20/per person, \$40/family

Prizes will be awarded! Bring a friend! Rain or shine!

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