

St. James' E-pistle

May 6, 2016

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

This Sunday is a busy day.

It's Mother's Day. Get those flowers and cards! You will hear more about this on Sunday, so there's no need to go into detail yet.

It's also the last Sunday of Easter, your last chance to wear liturgical white! The following Sunday is Pentecost in all its crimson splendor.

And then - because this Sunday isn't packed enough - it's Episcopal Charities Sunday (see the article below). Bring your best!

But there is one more thing. It's a small event that won't take more than a minute of your time but will have a big impact. This Sunday, we will offer a blessing to those who are about to embark on the Inquirers journey toward Confirmation/Reception.

Why is it important?

Because the route to Confirmation is hard, and those treading it will need the support of the parish.

Because the entire purpose of Confirmation is to enter into a mature faith, one that is not forced, one that is able to endure and thrive in a hard world. Most importantly, one that grows in loving relationship with God.

All of this needs your support, your prayers, your love. We cannot equip the saints for ministry - which is what we're doing here - if they do not come forward and ask your support, and if we do not offer it freely, willingly, lovingly.

Because this is important, I ask you to build into your Mother's Day celebrations the very loving - even motherly - act of holding up to God those who are taking such a big step. Our Inquirers this year are adults and teens. They are dedicated to God and to this parish, and I am excited to be part of their journey in faith.

I hope you are, too.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck+

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The News of the Church

Inquirer's Classes Begin: If you have not already signed up to be part of the Inquirer's Classes, a new sign up sheet will be available this Sunday. Inquirers are for all Episcopalians who want to A) be confirmed, B) be received into the Episcopal Church, or C) publicly reaffirm their faith when the bishop comes. Bishop Allen Shin will be here for confirmations on December 4. Classes begin Thursday, May 12 at 7:00 PM in the Wilks Room. If you have not already signed up to be part of the Inquirer's Classes, a new sign up sheet will be available this Sunday. Inquirers are for all Episcopalians who want to A) be confirmed, B) be received into the Episcopal Church, or C) publicly reaffirm their faith when the bishop comes. Bishop Allen Shin will be here for confirmations on December 4. **Classes begin Thursday, May 12 at 7:00 PM** in the Wilks Room.

Episcopal Charities Sunday - Sunday, May 8, 2016: Incorporated in December, 1996, Episcopal Charities is the mission arm of our Diocese. Episcopal Charities currently partners with forty-eight parish-based, non-sectarian feeding programs throughout our Diocese.

In addition to the actual grant, Episcopal Charities provides strategic training, operational support and required sustainability workshops for program leaders throughout the year

Here in the Mid-Hudson Region, we witness Christ's love shining, not only in Dutchess County, but also in Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. In Dutchess County, we see Christ's love shining through the mission of Food for Life/Comida de Vida Pantry sponsored by St. Thomas' Church, Amenia Union, Rhinebeck Food Pantry sponsored by the Church of the Messiah, Rhinebeck, Food Pantry sponsored by St. Paul's Church, Poughkeepsie, Food Pantry sponsored by Zion Church, Wappingers Falls and the Beacon Food Pantry sponsored by St. Andrew's Church and St. Luke's Church in Beacon.

Were you aware that roughly one in ten residents and nearly nineteen percent of children in the Mid-Hudson Region face food insecurity? Women, children, seniors, the working poor and neighbors with disabilities are most vulnerable to food insecurity.

Episcopal Charities Sunday highlights the issue of food insecurity that confronts many of our neighbors. Episcopal Charities' grant program enables us, through our donations, to extend Christ's love to grass-roots, parish-based programs that reflect the needs of that parish-based program's local area. Because our Diocese provides for the overhead expenses, 100% of your donation is designated specifically for programming.

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As faithful followers of Christ, please prayerfully consider making a donation to Episcopal Charities. There will be envelopes in the pews for you to make your donations. If you are writing a check, please make it payable to Episcopal Charities.

On behalf of our brothers and sisters throughout our Dioceses who struggle with food insecurity and who will benefit from your donation - THANK YOU!!

- Peace, Deacon Gail

Update on Liberty Station Special Collection: Thank you for your generous support of Liberty Station and for our homeless and at-risk veterans and their families. In addition to the many miscellaneous items donated and placed in the Liberty Station box in the Parish House, our parish raised \$768.00 for the Special Collection which will be used to purchase gift cards to stores that area easily accessed by the veterans who reside at Liberty Station.

On behalf of the veterans who will benefit from your generosity - THANK YOU!

- Members of the Outreach Committee

Parish Picnic: It's been a long time since we've had a good old fashioned Parish Picnic, but one is in the works now! Mark your calendars for Sunday, August 28. More details to come, but start practicing your grilling!

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.

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.

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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."

- 8 Church of the Ascension, Mount Vernon
- 9 Grace Church, Nyack
- 10 The Church of the Messiah, Rhinebeck
- 11 Diocesan Committee for Campus Ministry
- 12 Guild of St. Ives
- 13 St. Andrew's Church, Brewster
- 14 Postulants and Candidates for the Diaconate

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.

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:

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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

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, Ashley Konyn, Allelu Kurten, 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.

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.

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Birthdays (this past week):	Kathryn Clark
Birthdays (this coming week):	Erika Seagren; Rebecca Gausepohl
Acolytes:	May 8: Bryanna, Amelia and Braeden May 15: Jasmine, Jaylen and Bill
Altar Guild:	May 8: Team Number III May 15: Team Number I
8 a.m. Readers:	May 8: Angela Henry and Grant Ferris May 15: Debbie Belding and Sue DeLorenzo
10 a.m. Readers:	May 8: Regina Ardini and Judy Douglass May 15: Donna Beyer and Wendy Urban-Mead
Ushers:	May 8: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher May 15: Donna and John Beyer
Pledge Clerks:	May 8: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass May 15: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	May 8: David, Manuela, Isabel and Grace Roosevelt; Hank and Jackie Schroeder; Rick, Suzanne, Christian and Brooke Schroeder May 15: Suzanne Schryver; Saira, Rohit, Sanjana and Rohit Shahani
Coffee Hour Hosts:	May 8: Jodi Triola, Ross & Connie Eames, Pat Rooney May 15: Deirdre Mae Micker; The Urban-Meads

This Week's Lectionary

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22:12-14,16-17,20-21

John 17:20-26

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

Sermon Preached on
Sixth Sunday of Easter

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(May 1, 2016)

"Standy by Me"

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Please be seated.

When Fr. Chuck asked me to do a sermon, after Easter but before Camping Season, a few months ago, I went home and looked at all the Gospel lessons for those Sundays. When I came to the alternate Gospel lesson for today, I just knew that this is something that as the past Spiritual Care Director at Vassar says "I can preach that". Reading the passage, several ideas came into my mind about what I could speak to in this lesson, but as usual a few weeks ago I started searching thru various web sites that I have listed, and past sermons that I have done to mine them for ideas.

I found an old sermon of mine, from May 5th 2013, and wonders of wonders, it was on this exact passage. I came within a gnat's hair of just pulling it out and preaching that same sermon again, but realized that this time I had a different view on this passage. That got me to thinking about all the sermons that I have heard over the years, starting with Fr. Horine of St. Michael's Lexington KY, to Fr. Windsor, and Fr. Kramer. I remember some of them, and came to the conclusion that, even though the Sunday readings are on a three-year cycle, very few sermons are repeats. As we grow in Christ's love, we view the Bible passages a little differently each time we read them and as our lives change our perspective also changes. When Chuck asked me to do the sermon he said that I have a perspective of being a Deacon and working in a hospital setting which colors my thoughts and actions. Chuck has a perspective of a being a Priest and teacher, while Gail has the perspective of being a Deacon and the causes that she works for. This is a good thing. God has given us all talents to do what he has called us to do and provides us with His love and grace to carry them thru.

So in today's Gospel the part that really speaks to me this time is;

When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk."

Back in 2013, I likened that to a Country song, "Stand" by Rascal Flatts where the ending verse is;

"Every time you get up; And get back in the race; One more small piece of you; Starts to fall into place."

Now, the Gospel passage still means that to me, but over the past few years, I have been looking back more and more to my teenage years for my taste in music, i.e. 50's, 60's and 70's Rock n' Roll and what the song that I now also associate with this Gospel passage is "Stand By Me" by Ben E. King from 1961.

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In this passage here was a man that had been by that pool of water for thirty-eight years and was determined to get into it somehow. No one would help him, and when he was able to make his way to the pool, someone would enter the pool ahead of him. To understand what this means, we have to look at later manuscripts that expanded this portion of the Gospel by adding the following explanation, "waiting for the stirring of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well from whatever disease that person had."

This man responded to Jesus by saying, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." And what does Jesus do? He tells the man to stand up, take his mat and walk. I can visualize this, by seeing a small pool of water by the Sheep Gate that every once in a while is stirred up, and when that happens the sick, lame and paralyzed are helped by someone who is standing with them to the pool. This man had no one to help him, no one to stand by him and help him in his time of need, for thirty-eight years. Jesus could have walked by; He could have not gone to the pool that day. I like to think that He decided to that He would stand by this man and help him. Not in the way that the crowd knew by helping him to the pool, but standing by him and having him stand up and walk.

How do we stand by others? As Fr. Chuck reminded me, one perspective that I have is that of a hospital Chaplain. What is my job there? The doctors and nurses provide the medical care. The case managers provide for ongoing care when the patient leaves the hospital, so what is my job? Let me tell you about Mrs. Smith (not her real name). I received a call from the ICU unit that I should visit this woman, whose husband was a patient, and had just received some terrible news. So I went to the ICU waiting area and the case manager let me into the special waiting room, and there was Mrs. Smith. Crying, feeling alone and abandoned. She spoke about her husband and that he had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and what could she do? She spoke for quite some time about the last few years, and how her husband had lost weight, and gotten thin but he had refused to see a doctor about it. Talk about Deja vu. Here was a couple, in their mid-sixties, just like my mom and dad were when we got the news about his terminal cancer. I knew how she felt, as I had already lived thru this thirty-two years ago. The question in my mind then became, what could I do for her, rather than what could she do. Deacons do things. As an engineer and programmer I did things. But in my Chaplain training, I learned that doing is not always what it is cracked up to be and there were times, this being one of them, that just being with a person, standing by them was the only thing that you could do. Mrs. Smith and I talked for about thirty minutes, we prayed, and she seemed to settle down somewhat. It is said that God puts us in the place where we need to be at the right time, and this is exactly what was going on. Of all the Chaplains, I was the one who had lived thru this agony and could relate the most to her and help her begin the acceptance over the coming days and help her begin the healing that she would need. I was able to "be" with her, able to Stand By Her.