

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

Pulpit Notes

Brothers and Sisters:

Each year we come to that awkward moment when we get to Trinity Sunday, and nobody is sure what to do. Do you say "Happy Trinity!" Do we send out Trinity cards? Should everyone wear white, just as we wore red last week for Pentecost?

What do we do?

More importantly, what does it mean?

The Trinity is the only Feast of the Year that observes neither an event nor a person. It celebrates a relationship.

By that I mean that the Trinity is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each, according to our theology, is a unique person, yet only together are the God. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. Yet the Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit.

And yet they are one God.

How is this possible? People have scratched their head over this for centuries, so don't expect to get a grip on it in the next two paragraphs.

However, here's one thing we can say. Scripture tells us that God is Love. Love is, by definition, relational. Love without an object is not love. Without at least the potential for reciprocation, it is not love but is fascination or obsession. Love is when a give and take, a self-sharing, a desire to be with and seek the best for another takes place.

That's God. The Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit loves the Father, and together they form a relationship - they are love. We would say it is the first relationship to ever exist.

So if God is Love, and Love is relationship, God cannot exist outside of relationship. This Sunday, it is that relationship that we celebrate even as we scratch our heads and try to figure out how it works.

If this still seems too weird or "out there" think of this. This Sunday is also FATHER'S DAY. No father, no real father, can be a father without relationships. Typically in our culture there's the mother and at least one child which form a unique unit. The father isn't the mother or the child - but without the mother or child, he's not a father. Now, I realize that family takes all sorts of shapes and configurations, and that being a biological father doesn't necessarily mean

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

relationship. All analogies fall short, but at least with this one, you get the idea - the family is a relationship composed of unique individuals.

We may not be a Trinity, but it's still something to celebrate.

So **WEAR WHITE THIS SUNDAY** to celebrate Dad as well as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It'll be fun!

In Christ,

Chuck+

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

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 kidnappers
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

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

- 15 St. Andrew's Church, Yonkers
- 16 The Church of the Resurrection, Hopewell Junction
- 17 St. Paul's Church, Poughkeepsie
- 18 Christ Church, Warwick
- 19 St. Mark's Church, Fort Montgomery
- 20 The Congregational Support Plan Committee

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

21 Goldwater Memorial Hospital Chaplaincy, Roosevelt Island

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

RMM Walkathon: Thank you to all the St. James' folks who walked at the Rural and Migrant Ministries Walkathon! We did good!



Book Now On Sale: Fr. Chuck's book, "God, Life, and Everything" is now available for purchase! It will be in the parish hall after church at a cost of \$12.95. (plus \$1.05 tax). Checks should be made out to "The Hudson Valley News." Come on over to coffee hour and meet the author! He will be happy to autograph it if you wish. ;-)

Join the Fall Pilgrimage: Last March, five of us went on a Lenten "Rail Trail" Pilgrimage. It was successful enough that folks wanted to try it again! The Vestry has authorized a Fall Rail Trail Pilgrimage for September 13-14 - but only if we can get 15 people to register (to justify the expense of a supply priest). So, this Sunday there will be registration forms. If you are interested, please take one! But note that there will be a non-refundable \$15 deposit required to hold your spot (refundable only if we do not get the required 15 people). The deadline for registration is August 10. Because of the difficulty in finding supply clergy, this deadline cannot be changed.

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).

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

Girl Scouts Fundraiser: Girl Scouts Troop 10114 is having a pancake breakfast fundraiser at Applebees on June 28 from 8-10 a.m. Tickets are \$6. The troop is also selling gas card raffle tickets, with drawing that morning at Applebees (but you need not be present to win). Amelia McNamara and Taylor & Travyn Triola are all members of Troop 10114. Contact Maggie McNamara (773-9108) or Jodi Triola (489-4216) for tickets.

Plastic Bags Needed: The Community Garden is starting to harvest our early crops. We need more plastic bags to transport and distribute the vegetables at the Food Pantry. Please put them in the bin in the narthex during the growing season. Thank you.

Gluten Free Communion: Remember, if you have gluten allergies/intolerance, we have gluten free communion hosts. Please let Fr. Chuck know if you would like that option.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Kathleen Craft, Michael Day, Jane Gagliardoto, Kasey Gaulin, John Golden, Jack Gordy, Robert Guariglia, Andy Hall, Harold Hall, Brooke Helton, Rev. Don Hoger, Dalton K., Barbara Knakal, Rosemary Leuken, Doris Mack, Andrew Mendelson, Rev. Tim Millard, Clifford Plass, Gerald Plass, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Pat Rooney, John Schroeder, Richard Secor, James Sheeky, Naomi Slight, Debbie Stone, The Right Reverend E. Don Taylor, Gloria Veach, 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
(week ending June 15): Samantha O'Mara and Carol Bender

Birthdays
(next week): Anna Marie Pitcher

Acolytes: June 15: Gage Minter, Jasmine Thatcher and Charlie Urban-Mead

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

Altar Guild:	June 22: Mike Minter, Nancy Montero and Skye O'Halloran June 15: Team II June 22: Team III
8 a.m. Readers:	June 15: Debbie Belding and Paul Littlefield June 22: Angela Henry and Grant Ferris
10 a.m. Readers:	June 15: Wilma Tully/Bobbie Wells June 22: Patty Caswell/Nancy Montero
Ushers:	June 15: Bobbie and Cliff Wells June 22: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher
Pledge Clerks:	June 15: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher June 22: Paul Littlefield and Dean Caswell
Coffee Hour Hosts:	June 15: The Gausepohls, Deirdre Mae Micker and Leslie Quick June 22: Burkhardt family and Angela Henry

This Week's Lectionary

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Matthew 28:16-20

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

Sermon Preached on
Day of Pentecost (Whitsunday)
(June 8, 2014)

"Fire in the Belly"

You may want to listen very carefully for this:

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

waYiSHäaru shney-anäshiyim BaMachaneh shem häechäd elDad w'shem haSHeniy meydäd waTänach aleychem haruach w'heMah BaK'tuviym w'lo yätzu häohheläh waYitnabu BaMechaneh.

I hope you'll forgive my bad pronunciation - I'm more than a bit rusty. But you got it anyway, right? If that's not clear, how about this?

Und im Lager waren noch zwei Männer geblieben; der eine hieß Eldad, der andere Medad, und der Geist ruhte auch auf ihnen. Denn sie waren [als Älteste] verzeichnet und doch nicht hinausgegangen zur Stiftshütte; sondern sie weissagten im Lager.

You get it now, right? On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit rested on the apostles, and they spoke in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.

Only one thing. What I read to you was about the Holy Spirit, but it wasn't from Acts. It was from our Old Testament reading in Numbers - the story of Eldad and Medad and THEIR experience with the Holy Spirit.

You know - Moses brought a group of elders out to the tent of gathering where they were to receive a portion of the Spirit of God so they could help Moses lead the people who were too great a burden. Everyone does as they are expected, and the 70 elders prophesy in front of the congregation. Only problem is, Eldad and Medad - who do NOT go out to the tent - maybe they didn't feel righteous enough to go out to the tent and decided to stay home. Who knows? Nevertheless, they STILL receive a portion of the Spirit for who knows what reason - and they participate in some unauthorized prophecy!

This shocks everybody but Moses who says he wishes everyone were like these two.

What's going on?

The Fire in the Belly, that's what.

You may have figured out that fire has a big role on Pentecost. We wear red, after all, to remind us of the fire of the Holy Spirit that rested upon the apostles on Pentecost. But fire was important in the passage with Eldad and Medad, too. You see, God had become angry with the people just before this scene and had burned up many up at the edges of camp with fire.

That fire was not the fire in the belly. Fire in the belly usually means you are energized, ready to go out and do what needs to be done - go win the game, go stand up against an injustice, go ask that certain someone out on a date - whatever.

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

The fire in the belly that Eldad and Medad experienced is the one that came from God's spirit - they were fired up, as it were, to do what God had in mind. An important factor here is that this was not authorized - it was not what anyone expected - it was not okay. But they had been open to God, and when the Spirit said, "Prophesy," they did. How could they do otherwise, right?

Jump ahead a few centuries, and now you've got the people of God once again gathered in the holy place. And once again, you have unauthorized proclaiming of God's greatness. They are doing an amazing thing by speaking in all sorts of languages, and once again, the crowd disapproves.

The apostles have the fire in the belly. When God's Holy Spirit rests on you - you are energized - you have to speak!

Now, today, I know there are a lot of energized young folks in the world. School's either out or almost out. It's exciting especially for those who are graduating because it's a big world out there, and there are so many opportunities. You may have your future all planned out.

Ask your parents how nice and neatly all those plans work out. Not that you shouldn't make plans - they are a great way to move forward in life. But when you plan, make sure to make room for the Holy Spirit. Make room for some fire in your belly.

Because as surely as the Holy Spirit rested on Eldad and Medad who were not the "proper" folks to be getting it - and as sure as the Holy Spirit rested on the apostle - which nobody else expected - the Holy Spirit may rest on you. Or you. Or you.....

The point is that the Holy Spirit of God goes where it will, and it causes us to do things we might never expect. Any one of us may be moved to speak up, to act, to do the unexpected, whether it's something dramatic like selling your home and becoming a missionary or - who knows - becoming a priest, or something as simple as finding yourself talking to someone who says, "Do you believe in this God stuff?" And knowing it's time to answer.

Since we're talking about college, let me give you a small example from my college days. Back in my senior year in college, I wanted to get off campus and - like an adult - rent a house. So I got together with a couple of guys - Doug Hazelrigg with whom I had grown up, heck we went to church together as kids - and Dave. Dave quickly got a girlfriend and moved out, so we had an extra room.

In those days there was a guy who hung out around the university. We thought he had come as a student, and every now and then people reported seeing him in a lecture, but mostly he just hung around, always disheveled and looking lost. He did like to frequent the student union where he shot a lot of pool.

One day, I went to the grocery store to pick up my usual Ramen and tomato soup. Lots of it. At the store, I saw Andy. He saw me. My heart sank because let's face it, he was weird. When

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014

I checked out and left the store, I noticed that Andy left, too. Suddenly, we were walking side by side, which is not what I wanted. As we walked, however, a voice or feeling kept bugging me saying that there was a reason Andy was there. I walked further down the street, and Andy kept pace, eyeing my meager groceries. As I rounded the corner to our ramshackle house, it occurred to me that he was hungry. I had food. I swallowed hard and said, "Hey, you want to have lunch with me?"

"YES PLEASE!" was his immediate response. Silently, I moaned. Well, he scarfed down everything I offered, and then ate some more. Then he didn't leave. He just sat there. A long time. And it occurred to me that he had no place to stay - rumors had been that he slept in the woods a lot. So, regretting every moment, I said, "You want a place to stay tonight?"

"YES!" he exclaimed.

"NO!" I silently cried. What's worse, now I would have to explain it to Doug. Fortunately, he was pretty laid back and had even spent time with Andy before. He was okay with Andy hanging out for awhile.

But awhile turned into another night. He did not leave. Then a third night, and still he stayed. Then a fourth day, and we figured he was ready to move in for good. I was too much a coward to tell him to leave, and was preparing to abandon the house and find a new room somewhere. But on the fifth or sixth day, Doug sat him down and said, "Andy, it's time. You need to find a new place to stay." Without fuss, Andy said, "OK," and we never saw him again.

I felt badly about that. The Holy Spirit had put an opportunity to act in my lap - and I blew it. I figured God would never trust me with something important again. If buried the flame just because it got a little uncomfortable, what hope was there for me.

Only the Spirit does not let us off the hook so easily. The opportunity to act on the Spirit's promptings came again, and again, and again. Sometimes it leads you to places or situations you would rather not have, but often those are just the places where you'er needed. If you listen, you probably will hear that question about whether or not you believe this God stuff - more than once.

And if you do hear it, it just might be the Holy Spirit sweeping in like a wind and settling on you like fire. You can reject it - by the way. You can hear that wind and feel the fire and push it down because it doesn't fit in with what you were expecting. But if you let that fire in your belly grow - who knows what might happen?

So go out into the world - whether you're graduating this year, or just out of school for summer, or have been working for decades already - and remember Eldad and Medad. They had planned to stay home and do nothing. The Spirit had other plans for them.

Remember to keep your minds and hearts open to what the Spirit might have planned for you.

St. James' E-pistle

June 13, 2014