

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: November 4, 2018

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (All Saints Sunday)

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

NOTICE: This Sunday, worship will be in the Parish Hall. That is both services.

This Sunday should be the **last** Sunday we need to worship in the Parish Hall. Work is being done even now, and it is supposed to be completed by mid-next week. That's good because the following Sunday is November 11 — Veterans Day — or more to the point, the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. We will have a small moment of remembrance.

This Sunday is also — of course — the TIME CHANGE. So, Fall Back, Oh Mortal, forsake thy Summer time!

But the third thing about this Sunday is that it is **All Saints Sunday**. We will observe the feast in which we remember all the saints who have gone before. Technically, there's a difference between saints and all the others who have gone before. We even have a different day, November 2, to celebrate All Faithful Departed.

All Saints — and remember that it is usually November 1, but we can observe it on the closest Sunday — is when we remember with gratitude those whose lives have been examples for us in how to live out the Gospel, the bring the Kingdom of God closer, to love our neighbors as ourselves and especially to love God above all else.

The saints are often people who don't quite seem to fit in the world. They are often seen as oddballs or perhaps just irritants in the world. They are the ones who regularly point out to us where we are straying from the will of God, who work despite criticism to make God's love reality in the world.

Our job is to study and learn from them because their stories teach us how we too can be stewards of the time, skills, and resources and people placed in our care.

At the same time, we will recognize and pray for all those we love and cherish who have gone before and joined the great cloud of witnesses. I particularly will remember my mother who passed into life eternal this year.

This is a good time to hold up with thanksgiving and love those who have touched your life in particular. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in well-deserved peace.

But back to the saints and the examples they set: Please notice that they were the type of people who got involved in the world around them. They got involved in the political scenes of their day because they recognized that faith in action almost always leads us to the political realm

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where real-life decisions are made that affect all. These decisions affect the poor and weak disproportionately. That's why Christians who truly follow Christ will follow right to the halls of power.

That's why it is also the duty of every Christian to VOTE. This Tuesday Americans have the right, the privilege, and the duty to Vote. While neither I nor the church at large will tell you *how* to vote, it is my obligation to admonish you *to* vote.

If you need a ride to the polls, please call me. I will either find a ride for you or take you there myself if it is within my power. I am sure there are other parishioners willing to get folks to the polls. But we can't do that unless you ask. So ask, and it will be given to you....

I was given a t-shirt last month that reads on the front: "Honor the Martyrs...Register and Vote." On the back is a list of many who were killed trying to secure the right to vote for many of our most disenfranchised. On this All Saints Day feast, let us honor the martyrs, honor the saints, honor the sacred obligation laid at our feet by committing to vote.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +



You are invited!

To a
Newcomers Reception

On Thursday
November 8, 2018

6:30 PM

At
St. James'

(The Wilks Room, first door on the left in the Parish House)

This is a time for newer parishioners who have been here for not a year or less to meet “more seasoned” parishioners, to learn what’s available to do, to discover ways to be involved or find resources you need. There’s even a facility tour if you want.

Please RSVP at 845-229-2820
or to stjamesoffice@stjameshydepark.org.
Got questions? Just ask!

Announcements

Inquirer's Classes/Evening Prayer:

We are starting a special Inquirers Class for a small group who want to be confirmed/received in June at the Cathedral. The classes are, of course, open to anyone. They start **Tuesday, November 6 at 7:00 PM** at the Chapel.

We are ALSO starting an Evening Prayer service at **6:30 on Tuesdays** (excepting certain times such as the third Tuesday of the month when the Vestry meets). This will also be at the Chapel. Join us! All are invited.

LECTOR Training November 17:

If you are a current Lector or would like to become one - and we would love for EVERYONE to join this ministry - the rescheduled Lector Training Session is set for **Saturday, November 17** at 10:00 AM. Please see me (Fr. Chuck) if you would like to attend the training. All current lectors are encouraged to attend since "tune ups" are always helpful.

Men's Breakfast November 17:

8:00 AM at Cranberry's.

Nursery School Craft Fair:

The Annual Craft Fair is **November 17** in the Parish Hall. Come support this thriving ministry!

Altar Guild Meeting:

ALSO on November 17 (a popular day), we have an Altar Guild meeting at 9:30 AM at the home of Lynne Koch. Planning for Advent is on the agenda.

A Season of Prayer: For a Mid-term Election

Forward Movement, a ministry of the Episcopal Church, is encouraging us, as Episcopalians and as followers of Jesus Christ, to join in a “*Season of Prayer: For a Mid-term Election.*” “This is a two-week period in which we are encouraged to pray each day with a particular intention for this time in our national life and a collect from *The Book of Common Prayer*”.

This time of prayer begins this Sunday, October 21st and continues through Wednesday, November 7th. You will find copies of “A Season of Prayer: For an Election” in the narthex for the following weeks: October 21st - week 1; October 28th - week 2 and November 4th - week 3.

Forward Movement states in their encouragement to participate in this special Season of Prayer: “At a time when nearly everyone agrees that we are being consumed by fear and division, this is a prayerful, intentional opportunity to change the conversation. While we will certainly differ in our politics, we can surely join together in prayer. We hope you will join in this season of prayer.”

Please prayerfully consider participating in this Season of Prayer.

Peace,

Deacon Gail

Community Thanksgiving Service:

On **Tuesday, November 20, at 6:30 PM**, the Hyde Park Association of Churches will host a Community Thanksgiving Service. This annual event has been a part of Hyde Park life for decades and reminds us that we are called to come together to offer thanks.

In these tumultuous times, it is ever more important for us to come together in solidarity and unity. Please make every effort to join us at the United Methodist Church. We want a broad representation!

Join the Reformulated Graveyard Committee:

“In many ways, a graveyard is like an encyclopedia of community history. A cemetery contains birth and death records, genealogies, and historical anecdotes. The stones reflect the times and tenor of the people, their moral and religious beliefs, and their customs. The size and elaborateness of tombstones tell of the wealth of those buried under them, and collectively these monuments reflect the economy of a town through various periods in its history. Changing tastes in art and architecture are found in graveyards, just as in the houses of the town” — Jack Sanders.

The Vestry voted at their October meeting to rejuvenate the Graveyard/Columbarium Committee. There’s an important reason for this: The observation or study of graveyard epitaphs and art have become increasingly popular pastimes, especially in the Hudson Valley. St. James’ Graveyard has no shortage of interesting gravestones. The Annual Graveyard Tours share our history with the community, but the grounds need some tender care and maintenance and mapping to continue this as a self-guided tour throughout the year. **If you would like to learn more or volunteer email Vestry member Dan Raugalis at raugalis@gmail.com**

It’s Pageant Time!

Look for a sign-up sheet this Sunday to be part of the Epiphany Pageant. The pageant this year will be part of a potluck supper on January 5. Think of it as holy dinner theater! All are welcome to sign up, and you get to pick (or create!) your role. It’s a good time to have some fun!

November 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11	12 Office Closed	13 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Inquirers	14 10 AM Morning Prayer 2 PM Hyde Park Assisted Living	15 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 - Reading Adventures	16 FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	17 8 AM Men's Breakfast 9:30 AM Altar Guild Meeting 10:00 AM Lector Training
18	19 Office Closed	20 6:30 Community Thanksgiving Service	21 10 AM Morning Prayer 2:00 PM. Hyde Park Assisted Living Eucharist	22 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	23 FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	24

25	26 Office Closed	27 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Inquirers	28 10 AM Morning Prayer 7 PM Vestry	29 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 - Reading Adventures	30 FREE PRAYER FRIDAY	
<p>Sundays: Holy Eucharist Rite I is at 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rite II (with music) is at 10:00 AM. Sunday School and nursery are available at 10:00 AM. Between Service Classes on Sundays are from 9:15 to 9:45 in the Wilks Room.</p>						

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

<https://www.diocesenyn.org/administration/for-clergy/liturgical-and-sacramental/diocesan-calendar-of-intercession/>

- 4 All Saints' Church, Manhattan
- 5 All Saints' Church, Valley Cottage
- 6 St. Mary's Church, Tuxedo Park
- 7 Credentials Committee and The Inspector of Elections, Diocesan Convention
- 8 Secretary and Assistant Secretary, Diocesan Convention
- 9 Diocesan Convention Planning Committee
- 10 Deputies to Diocesan Convention

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ashley, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Darlene Calgagni, Mariel Carter, Joanne Clark, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Brian Ganter (deployed to Afghanistan), Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Gloria Golden, Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Tedi Kramer, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Jim Lynn (Carol Bender's brother - facing surgery), Doris Mack, Margaret, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginero Milano, Lillian Peralta, Mary Bowers Peters (stroke), Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), John Ross, Hank Schroeder, James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Carl Smith, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Georgia Verven, 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 all right.

Birthdays (this past week):	Michael Fenwick, Sue Fenwick and Sophie Ciferri
Birthdays (this coming week):	Sue DeLorenzo, August ("Bud") Oetjen, Riley Hall and Gwendolyn Cookingham
Acolytes:	November 4: Russell Urban-Mead and Braeden Hall November 11: Nancy Montero and Jaylen Thatcher
Altar Guild:	November 4: Team III November 11: Team III
8 a.m. Readers:	November 4: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth November 11: Shannon Butler and Deb Belding
10 a.m. Readers:	November 4: Jim Oppenheimer-Crawford and Andy Hall November 11: Patty Caswell and Judy Douglass
Ushers:	November 4: Andrew and Tanya Hall November 11: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher
Pledge Clerks:	November 4: Joanne Lown and Sue DeLorenzo November 11: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	November 4: Judy Douglass, Patti Drake, Sylvia Erlandson; Mike, Lori and Bill Fenwick November 11: Ann Farrell and Ray Farrell, Grant and Shirley Ferris,
Coffee Hour Hosts:	November 4: Audrey Horne, Eric Zavadil November 11: Jodi Triola and Mike Fenwick

This Week's Lectionary

Ruth 1:1-18
Psalm 146
Hebrews 9:11-14
Mark 12:28-34

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 287- For All the Saints
Sequence: 286 - Who Are These Like Stars Appearing
Offertory: Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones
Communion: Taizé: Live In Charity
Recessional: 293 - I Sing A Song of the Saints of God

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Jennifer Barrows

8 am

About this guy Job. Job was really really good. Serious good. All the time. He probably even dreamt good. Everyone liked Job because he was so good. He had lots of friends and a big perfect family, seven sons and three daughters. The sons and daughters were perfect children. They were so polite and they never got into trouble. The girls were beautiful and bright and talented and the boys were bright and handsome and really good at sports. The only thing was, his wife was a bit of a nag, but Job loved her.

God liked Job a lot too. Now you have to picture the scene here. God is sitting around in heaven with the angels and stuff and the angels are talking about how discouraging it is with all these bad guys doing bad things down on earth. It's what angels love to do, gossip about what humans are getting up to and you know it's always more fun to talk about naughty stuff than good stuff. And here comes the Satan, sauntering in to lean on the arm of God's throne and complain about someone. This is early on in the history of heaven and the Satan hasn't been kicked out yet. See in this story the Satan is an officer in the heavenly court, like the district attorney on Law and Order or the attorney general in Washington DC. It's his job to investigate and prosecute the crimes human beings do on earth. Well this Satan takes his job very seriously. He loves his job. There's nothing he likes more than bringing down a good person who happened to make even just one tiny mistake. On the other hand, what God likes more than anything is watching people do good stuff. So whenever the Satan comes before God with yet another case of a man or woman, girl or boy, dog or cat, bird or snake messing up, God says, But just look at my servant Job. Consider Job. Well, the Satan is really sick of considering Job. Over the years the Satan has become convinced that there is no such thing as a good human being and the more God boasts about Job's goodness, the more the Satan wants to bring Job down. The Satan is sure that he knows better than God who is getting old and tends to think the best about everybody. Kinda pathetic.

So one day when God says, Consider Job, for the umpteen millionth time, the Satan has had it. He says, Look, boss, it's easy for Job to be a good person because he has a perfect life. But I'm sure there's a crime in there somewhere. Let me put him to the test. Please. If he's really good then he'll ace the test with no trouble, but if he's the fake I think he is, then he'll curse you. God didn't think

this was a terrific idea, but the Satan wouldn't give up and kept saying that God didn't really trust Job or God would let the Satan put him through the wringer.

Well, God finally said OK, go for it. The Satan said he wanted power to do any kind of test. God said OK, but the Satan could not take Job's life. So, the trial of Job began. The Satan took away Job's land and wealth. Job praised God. The Satan took away Job's family, except for the nagging wife. Job went into mourning for his family, but still praised God. The Satan took away Job's health. Job went to the community ash heap, smeared ashes all over himself tore his clothes, and sat in mourning and misery. Job's wife cursed God and told Job to do the same. But decked in ashes and rags, Job continued to praise God. The Satan wasn't happy.

Finally, the Satan sent Job three so called friends to visit Job, to give him the benefit of their advice. Is there any greater torture than well-meaning advice? They told Job what a sinner he must be for all this to happen to him and he should stop being so proud and just confess his sins and ask God for forgiveness. Well, Job stopped praising God and started to defend himself. But he did not curse God. Job told the friends that he had done nothing to cause the disasters that had happened to him. The friends advised him to think carefully, there had to be something. Job told them there was nothing and they should go away and leave him alone. The friends told him if he couldn't think of something bad he had done, he should just admit he was a bad person in a general sort of and ask God's general forgiveness. Job began getting a little nasty with his friends and started to mutter and even yell at God, but he did not curse God. Instead he began to tell God off. He said it wasn't fair what had happened to him and it wasn't, but he didn't curse God. He spent a lot of time working on his case against God and demanding a trial before the heavenly court. And he demanded a defense attorney who would take all the information and present his case in court. That's the famous passage, the I know that my redeemer lives passage. It's popular at funerals and there's a great music setting of it. The word translated as redeemer is go-el, or one who can negotiate, one who can appear in the heavenly court, a dream-team defense attorney. But in that heavenly court there was only God, the Satan and a bunch of gossipy angels. Only God could have taken the role of defense attorney, but God was the judge. We Christians have taken over this passage and we see Jesus as the one-man dream-team - God becoming human in Jesus, understanding what it is to be human, and interceding for human beings as God before God.

But this story is anywhere from hundreds to thousands of years older than Jesus. And it is trying to make sense of unearned disaster, of bad things that happen to good people, of those times when God does not deliver us from evil. Like the holocaust. Like the slaughter in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh yesterday. Like the death of a child. In this story God takes pity on Job. Since Job cannot go to God, God comes to Job and speaks with him, like a father sitting on the edge of a child's bed and trying to explain why a bad thing, a terrible thing has happened. God sits on the edge of Job's ash heap. But God is not Job's father. God is God. God is king of the universe, president of the world, pope of all religions, the Creator come to answer a creature's accusations. For the child there is no reason good enough, no way to understand, to get the mind around a senseless cause and its devastating effect. As God talks, what the child can understand, what Job can understand, is the simple fact that the Creator of all that is, is sitting there on the edge of the ash heap and speaking just with him, that God is actually trying to answer Job's answerless questions.

And what God says, is. God says, Hush, now, shhhh. Look at this good thing. I made it. Look at my world that I made. Could you make such a thing? And yet you challenge me. And here I am, the ruler of the universe, who answers to no one, here to answer you. O Job, look at the rivers. Are they

not glorious? And eagles. Oh, and Job, consider the hippopotamus. Then God goes into a long poem in praise of the glories of the hippopotamus. Job, who had never cursed God, now began once again to laugh and to praise God. How could he not? Then God sent the Satan off to find some real crimes and gave Job back his health, his land and wealth and made his wife stop nagging long enough for them to have 10 more children, 7 strong boys and 3 beautiful girls. Life went on and Job continued to be a very good guy. But Job was never quite the same again, partly because of the bad things that had happened to him and his family, but mostly, mostly because God had come to sit on the edge of his ash heap and ask him, Job, to consider the hippopotamus.

Bad things happen. 9/11, tsunamis, cancer, hurricanes, senseless murders, wars, bombs, rapes, and deaths of precious children. And when they do, nothing is ever quite the same again. It cannot be. But if we allow ourselves, and when, finally, we can allow ourselves, to listen, part of that permanent difference in our lives can be because God came to sit on the edge of our beds and urged us, sang to us, gently asked of us that we consider the hippopotamus.

10 am

So, here's Bartimaeus. We can learn a lot from Bartimaeus. Let's call him Bart, because he's a bit like Bart Simpson. Direct, I think you'd call it. If you're being nice. He's certainly not your typical Episcopalian. A little too loud. Doesn't give a hoot what anybody thinks of him. Brash, rude, and blind. He wasn't born blind, so something happened to make him lose his sight. And he has a father everyone seems to know or why mention him? Bartimaeus means son of Timaeus. Maybe his dad was blind too. Maybe he was rich, or into politics or maybe he was the village fool. Maybe everyone looked at Bartimaeus and said, O **that** Timaeus. Well, that explains it.

So here's Bart and he's blind and a beggar. He's a cheerful sort. Not up on proper beggar etiquette; not pitiful or bedraggled, not whining or embarrassed, no noble and stoic acceptance of his fate. In fact, not beaten down at all. He's a loudmouth. Makes you want to give him money just to shut him up. A Monty Python character, is our Bart. And he's not a bit angry. I mean, how would you feel if something or someone took your sight away, if the only way you could make a living was by begging? Angry, I'll bet. Mechtild, a 13th century mystic said anger is dark. Appropriate for a blind man who lives in perpetual dark, isn't it? Mechtild also said the opposite of anger is not as you might think, acceptance. No, the opposite of anger is humility: she said that humility is bright with light. Bart? Humility? Can humility be found in a loudmouth? Well, Bart may have been blind, but he clearly lived his life as if it were bright with light. He jumps up, the gospel tells us. He runs to Jesus. He is irrepressible. Dark and angry he is not.

Humility is simply knowing one's worth. Not having an unrealistically high opinion of oneself. Too high an estimation of one's worth leads to arrogance and abusive behavior. It tempts us to compare and compete, to say I am better than you, or, I'm worse off than you, blinder than you, the blindest that ever was. Both arrogant responses. Deadly pride. Nor is humility having too low an opinion of our worth, seeing ourselves as victims of fate, victims of a capricious god, victims of some deep conspiracy. Too little self-worth tempts us to other deadly sins. Resentment, envy, sloth, gluttony, avarice. We feel we have no other recourse, being as unimportant, as forgotten, as powerless as we are. We can either become bullies trying to make others pay for our misfortune, or we can let our worthlessness take over our lives, eating ourselves up from the inside out. Nor is humility steering some kind of middle course between too much worth or too little. Humility is the simple reality of who we are. O, not the world's reality. The world judges our worth by our productivity, our

accumulated wealth and power, our wit and beauty. Bart was useless to the world, worth nothing. Annoying, even.

But Bart knew his worth and would not betray it. He heard Jesus was nearby and made such a ruckus that Jesus had to pay attention. Bart would not shut up. See? Bart was praying. Out loud. Loudly, even. Help, he prayed. Help, over here. Here I am, over here. No quiet desperation for our Bart. No powerful Zen meditation. Just powerful lungs and a big mouth praying for help. Trusting there was help somewhere. Knowing help is always a gift, and not something owed him because of his blindness. Now what about our prayer? We try to earn God's help. You know we do. We try to make deals with God. Give me my sight and I'll read nothing but the Bible, I'll paint the church ceiling, fix the furnace. Get me out of this scrape and I'll never do it again. Well, some prayers are lies. We know that, don't we. So does God. Let me win the lotto and I'll give half of it to feed the poor. No, wait, I go to church every Sunday so I deserve to win the lotto. Not Bart. Bart just kept yelling and didn't stop. It is Jesus who stopped, jolting his disciples who were hoping he'd just keep moving. But Jesus stopped, maybe thinking, O this I gotta see. And notice Jesus did not rush over to him, full of sympathy, ready to display his miraculous healing to the crowd. This is not John's gospel where Jesus is always setting up situations that prove his awesome divinity. This is Mark's gospel, simple, straightforward, common sense, humble Mark.

So Jesus just stopped. He made no move toward this man who could not see him or see his way to him. Tell him to come, he said. He didn't say it to Bart because Bart was too busy yelling to hear Jesus say anything. Prayer is like that sometimes. Jesus did not say bring him to me, telling his disciples to go fetch. So, there's this big space between Jesus and Bart, space that Bart will have to navigate on his own to get to Jesus. Jesus did not pity Bart or patronize him. Jesus honored Bart's worth. Think for a moment how reassuring that is. Scary, sure, but rock solid reassuring. We are not going to be dragged to Jesus against our will. We to come on our own. So often our prayer, even desperate prayer, when we are screaming for help, seems to dissipate into a huge emptiness. We may want to be dragged. We want with all our being to feel the intimacy of God's presence, but the intimacy is not there and we begin to doubt our worth. God is there all right, but God is not always available to us. Every saint will tell you that. In those long dry spells of blindness, deafness and muteness, think of Bartimaeus, blind and a long way from Jesus and yelling for help. Having heard that Jesus was out there somewhere, but not sure Jesus could hear him. Think of Jesus having faith in Bartimaeus, faith, not pity, and honoring Bart's worth. Think of God having faith in you, honoring your worth, your spiritual maturity. Don't stop yelling. God will send someone to tell you to come. Or it will be a song, or a memory, or an aching loss that breaks a dam of tears you were holding back so long you forgot it was there.

Bart got the message. He threw off his cloak and moved. Do we hear sweet soaring violins on the soundtrack? Is everything suddenly slow-mo as Bart does grand jetes on his way to Jesus? Not at all. Far from it. Bart cuts a ridiculous figure. Throwing off his cloak indeed. He is all but naked. He has to feel his way to Jesus. Don't we all? We can hear the ones who tried to shut Bart up, laughing at him. Bart the clown. Bart doesn't care. It makes no difference to him, what he looks like, how ridiculous he is. He stumbles and gropes til there he is standing before Jesus. Jesus does not touch him or praise him, just says What can I do for you. No patronizing, just two men in the bright light of humility, each knowing his worth. And Jesus says, well look at that. And that's what Bart does, he looks. For the first time in a long time, Bart looks, straight at Jesus. And takes his place among the disciples, laughing, I think, and dispensing high fives while the disciples scramble to find something for him to clean himself with, something to wear, but they're used to that by now. Jesus didn't cure

Bart. Jesus and Bart together cured Bart. Why do you think Jesus says again and again, your faith has made you whole. Bart the comedian, the cut up, the loudmouth. The man of faith who knows his worth. Worth more than he could ever pay. Worth a few pennies, maybe, for the water and minerals that make up his body mass. Priceless because of the life God gave him. Beyond price. What are you worth? I'll tell you. You are priceless.

Our lives are gifts given us not to preserve, but to spend. We can spend life in the dark, smoldering, perpetual victims marinating in anger and fear of being exposed as fakes. We can inflate our worth so that others are lesser beings whom we can neglect or abuse with impunity. We can go back and forth between the two. Or, having met Jesus, we can spend the rest of our lives knowing our worth, and knowing in the bright light of our humility, that every single human being has exactly the same worth. Thanks be to God.

Thanks be to Jesus and countless alleluias for the example of Bartimaeus. Help us all to follow his example; to pray passionately, ceaselessly, and to leap up and run, stumble, grope our way to you Lord, when you interrupt our cries with the message to come. Help us as your disciples to deliver your message, regardless of the person you have sent us to. And give us the humility to remember you need not consult with us on whom to call. We thank you endlessly for calling even us. Amen.

A WORD ABOUT RECORDED SERMONS:

Most weeks, I upload a recorded copy of the sermon onto my Facebook page as well as St. James' YouTube channel. I have not yet figured out how to upload them to the St. James' Facebook page but am working on it.

You can also listen to sermons by going to YouTube (www.youtube.com) and searching for "St. James Episcopal Church, Hyde Park, NY". There, you will not only find sermons, but also videos of the Fireside Chats and other videos of interest. You can subscribe to that page, and then when new content is uploaded, you will receive a notification.

SERMON VALUATION FORM

It is not necessary to take notes during the sermon. Rather, you can take some time afterwards to recollect the sermon and its effect on you. Give yourself a few minutes for each of the questions. If you choose to share this with the preacher, it can be a powerful aid to better preaching - but this is not a form to be handed to the preacher and forgotten. It is an aid for you, so you can speak directly with the preacher and answer follow-up questions.

1. WHAT ARE YOU STILL HEARING?

That is, without evaluating it, what are the words or phrases from the sermon that are still echoing in your ears? Are there any "ear worms"?

2. WHERE MIGHT THIS BE LEADING?

As a listener, where does this sermon lead you? What does it invite you to? What are the next steps in your faith that might arise from this sermon?

3. HOW DOES THIS SERMON "PLAY"?

That is, how is it organized or ordered? What steps has the preacher taken you through? What structure did you notice in this sermon? What has it asked you to do?

4. HOW MIGHT THIS SERMON "GROW"?

That is, what suggestions would you have to hone the message of this sermon, to make it more engaging, inspiring, logical, fleshed out... No sermon is ever entirely done; its themes will be revisited over time. What would help the next time be more compelling?