

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: February 11, 2018

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As shocking as it may seem, Lent will start in less than a week. You know what that means ...

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! Ashes on the forehead. Lenten Breakfasts!

And probably, many of you will give up something for Lent. Cigarettes? Drink? Chocolate? Coffee (No chance!).

But perhaps you might want to take on something - a Lenten Discipline. Sure, part of the privation during Lent is to remind us that we bring nothing into this world, and we will leave this world with nothing. Part of the discipline of Lent is to let go of worldly things.

Yet the operative word has always been discipline. To take upon ourselves something that brings us closer to the God who made us and who gives us life in this world and the next. To understand our utter dependence upon God, yet also our interdependence upon each other. None of us is an island, none of us is self-made, and each of us is made to be in relationship with others.

What sort of discipline can you take on that will reinforce this message in your mind and soul? That will be different for each of us.

But I have a suggestion. Maybe two. First, come to church. Yes, yes, you would expect me to say this. But consider it for a moment. Discipline is the practice of consistently doing something that brings some sort of good. Discipline means doing it even when it is inconvenient or hard. It's like when you teach your children to brush their teeth. Few children find it convenient or fun - but with discipline, it becomes a natural part of their life, and after awhile, it feels strange NOT to brush teeth. We know how good for us brushing teeth is, but human nature dictates that if you get away from it for awhile, it becomes harder and harder to get back into it.

I've experienced this with going to the gym. I need to go in order to remain healthy. But when I skip a day, it becomes harder to go the next day. Skip several days, and it becomes that much harder to get up and out the door. Every time I've taken an extended break from the gym, I've eventually gone back because I didn't like the way I felt physically.

The same is true for church. It's only once a week, so when things get in the way, it becomes just a little harder to go back the next week. You might not notice it, but it does. If travel, work, sports or health keep you away longer, well, it takes a real effort of will to get up and dressed on a Sunday morning. And if you've been away for a long time, then it gets in your head, and you're afraid to come back because of what people might say. I hear this all the time.

But this is the Year of Attendance. So make it a discipline to be here. If you want to think of Lent as a time to give something up, give up that extra hour of Sunday sleep, give up that extra cup of coffee (yes, I know how hard that is, but Lenten Breakfasts have coffee!), give up that extra weekend trip.

Because if brushing teeth is good for oral health, and if going to the gym is good for physical health, being at church is good for spiritual health. Most of the reasons we might have for skipping out on church are not generally as pressing as we think they are, but missing life together here will be more harmful to your inner life than you think. In the end,

Of course, if you're already attending church weekly, maybe you can make your discipline inviting friends to church. And if you haven't done it yet, you can make your discipline to fill out the Attendance Questionnaire. I am still gathering questionnaires and collating the information.

You may ask, if I am asking you to take on a discipline, what is mine? I am doing two things. First, on Ash Wednesday only, I am taking part in Ashes-To-Go. It is a program where we go to public spaces and offer ashes. This usually results in conversations about God. This program is not generally for parishioners because the hope is that we all will attend worship services at church. It's primarily to reach out to those who do not know the church or have been away for awhile.

The second part of my discipline is what I'm calling "Free Prayer Friday." Every Friday I will sit for an hour at Cranberry's (because the owner said I could) with a sign that reads "Free Prayer." I did this several times last year and always had good conversations and prayer with people who came by. But I got distracted and sidetracked and ... well... like the gym, I quit going. But this Lent, I am committing to it through Good Friday. Pray for me!

In the end, discipline is good for Body and Soul. I encourage you to use your Lent as a season of discipline designed to bring you closer to God and to each other.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

ATTENDANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20

You are a member of St. James', and we are blessed to have you. Your presence is crucial to the life of this parish. When parishioners come together, everyone's life is made more joyful, fuller and in general better.

In our ongoing effort to increase attendance by current members, we would like to ask you a few questions. Please take this seriously and answer as honestly as you wish. You may include your name or not - that is up to you. If you do, your answers will be held in strictest confidentiality, though the general information will be collated for parish consideration.

No matter how often you attend, we want to hear what keeps you away or keeps you coming back.

Thank you in advance for your help understanding what is needed to advance the work of the gospel.

- 1 How long have you attended St. James'? _____
- 2 On average, how regularly did you attend over the past 12 months?
___Weekly ___Biweekly ___Monthly ___Bimonthly ___Less often
- 3 Was this more than, less than, or about the same as the previous year?
___More ___Less ___About the same
- 4 If you attended **less** this year, to what do you attribute this? *Check as many as apply and use as much space as you need to elaborate on any point:*
___Work ___Sports ___Travel ___Health ___Family complexities
___Anger at the rector ___Anger at other parish leadership ___Anger at
the Episcopal Church ___Music quality ___Sermon quality ___Sunday
School size ___Loss of Faith ___Other

- 5 If you attend **more**, to what do you attribute that? *Check as many as apply and use as much space as you need to elaborate on any point:*
___Health ___Family ___Seeking Closer Relationship with God ___Good Fellowship ___Music quality ___Sermon quality ___Sunday School size ___Other
- 6 Answering as honestly as you can, what would make you attend more? We will leave this open for you to answer as you choose, but it can range from “Nothing” to small changes like “Need a ride,” to significant things like “Change in leadership.”
- 7 If there is anything you feel needs to be said that is not addressed here but needs to be said, please let us know.

Name (optional)_____

Announcements

A PLEDGE PLEA:

If you have not pledged yet, please do so. Letters will go out next week from the Vestry to remind you about your pledge. Please help!

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper:

Join us **Tuesday, February 13 at 6:00 PM** for the annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! We eat pancakes for dinner! We have Fr. Chuck's Pancake Decorating Fun! We have Fellowship as we prepare for the Lenten Fast.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 13, 2018
6:00 PM



St. James' Parish Hall

All are Welcome

Celebrate a night of Family Fun
as we prepare for Ash Wednesday and Lent.
FREE FOR ALL... We hope you'll join us!

Kids! You're Invited to take part in
Fr. Chuck's Pancake Decorating Fun!

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES:

ASH WEDNESDAY is **February 14**. Begin the Lenten Season the right way with the Imposition of Ashes. The iconic phrase, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" sets the tone for a season of reflection and repentance. To help you better worship, there are three services offered that day. **6:30 AM, 10:00 AM, and 7:00 PM**. Please try to make one of them.

Ash Wednesday



Distribution of Ashes at St. James'

6:30 AM

10:00 AM

7:00 PM

Men's Breakfast:

This month, we will have the Men's Breakfast as usual at **8:00 AM** at Cranberry's on **Saturday, February 17**. A NOTE ABOUT CPR TRAINING: Because of regulation changes at the firehouse, this course will have to be postponed for the time being. As soon as the picture is clearer, we will schedule the training.

Women's Dinner:

St. James Women's Group will meet Monday, February 19th at 6:00pm at Coppola's in Hyde Park. Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 7th to Regina Ardini (rdawordgarden@gmail.com) or Patty Glancey (pglancey@ymail.com). We look forward to seeing new and familiar faces in 2018!

Between-Service Class on Lenten Break:

This week will be our final Between-Service Class until Easter. In preparation for Lent, the miracles we'll look at this week will be the miracles in Egypt leading up to the Exodus.

After that, come to our **Lenten Breakfasts** which will be every Sunday in Lent (except for February 25 due to the bishop's visitation).

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO: We are already planning the next two sessions for the Easter and Pentecost seasons.

In **Easter**, we will have a 4-5 part series on the **Saints** - who they were/are and why it's important to know their real stories.

In **Pentecost**, we will have a series on **Prayer** - What does it really do? How do you do it?

As always, this class begins at 9:15 and ends at 9:45.

Lenten Meditation Booklet Coming!

The response to requests for Lenten Meditations has been overwhelming. Thank you! With gratitude in my heart, I note that we actually had more meditations than dates in Lent - and all of these should be read by us all. SO, I have created an additional section in the booklet for your further meditations. If you have something that is burning in your soul to share, send it to me before Sunday evening, and it will be in the Lenten Meditation booklet.

Inquirers Class This Week:

Inquirers Class had to be cancelled last week due to the weather. So this week's class will be a make-up class on Holy Communion. HOWEVER, because this Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, the class will take place on **Thursday at 7:00 PM**. As always, all parishioners are welcome, especially if you have questions about what's happening in the Eucharist.

Youth Group Next Sunday:

The Youth Group of St. James' will meet next Sunday, February 18, at 3:00 PM. Among other things, we will discuss a field trip on March 4, to see "A New York Lamentation." Youth Group is open to anyone in middle or high school. We welcome your friends, too!

Are You Getting the Episcopal New Yorker?

If you're not receiving the *Episcopal New Yorker*, the quarterly magazine of our Diocese, email Andrew Gary at agary@diocesenyc.org with your name, mailing address, and the name of the congregation where you are a member. You'll receive the newspaper four times per year. It's that simple to keep up on news of the Diocese and read Engaging yet challenging articles about our faith.

Become An Acolyte:

Whatever your age, if you want to become an acolyte, we will make a place for you. If you attend Sunday School, we will work to make sure you don't miss too much!



We are collecting the following items for the Dutchess County SPCA:

- Purina Dog Chow *Natural*
- Purina Cat Chow
- Dog Treats (any kind, just super yummy)
- Cat Treats (any kind of yummy treats)
- Canned Cat and Dog Food (any kind)
- Dog Toys
- Cat Toys
- Dog Collars with Metal Buckles (all sizes)
- Bleach (basic disinfecting)
- Paper Towels
- Dawn Dish Soap
- Laundry Detergent



636 Violet Avenue
Hyde Park, NY 12538
845-452-7722
www.dcsPCA.org



February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11	12 Office Closed 7:30 PM Choir Practice	13 6PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	14 ASH WEDNESDAY 6:30 AM - Ashes 7:30 Ashes To Go (@ Cranberry's) 10 AM - Ashes 7 PM - Ashes	15 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 PM Reading Adventures	16 11 AM Free Prayer Friday @ Cranberry's	17 8 AM Men's Breakfast
18 3 pm Youth Group	19 Office Closed 6 PM Women's Group @ Coppola's	20 7 PM Vestry	21 10 AM Morning Prayer 2 PM Eucharist at HP Assisted Living 7:00 PM Inquirers	22 11 AM Bible Study 3:30 PM Reading Adventures	23 11 AM Free Prayer Friday @ Cranberry's	24
25 Episcopal Visitation with Confirmations	26 7:30 PM Choir Practice	27	28 10 AM Morning Prayer 7:00 PM Inquirers			

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.

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.diocesen.org/administration/for-clergy/liturgical-and-sacramental/diocesan-calendar-of-intercession/>

- 12 Zion Church, Dobbs Ferry
- 13 St Mary's Ghanaian Church, Bronx
- 14 **Ash Wednesday**
Episcopal Charities of New York
- 15 Church of the Atonement, Bronx
- 16 The Episcopal Asian Supper Table
- 17 RenewalWorks Program for Congregational Vitality

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Mariel Carter, Joann Clark (recovery from surgery), Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Tedi Kramer, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginerio Milano, Mary Bowers Peters (stroke), Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), Pat Rooney, John Ross, 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): Kasey Gaulin and David Wardell, Jr.
- Birthdays
(this coming week): Andrew Gausepohl, Cathi Tegtmeier, Doris Mack, Paul O'Halloran and William Fenwick
- Acolytes:
February 11: Nancy Montero and Jaylen Thatcher
February 18: Russell Urban-Mead and Braeden Hall
- Altar Guild:
February 11: Team III
February 18: Team III
- 8 a.m. Readers:
February 11: Julett Butler and Lynne Koch
February 18: Lucille Ogden and Grant Ferris
- 10 a.m. Readers:
February 11: Wendy Urban-Mead and Justin Bohlmann
February 18: Patty Caswell and Barbara Slegel

Ushers: February 11: Dean Caswell and Audrey Horne
February 18: Dean Caswell and Audrey Horne
Pledge Clerks: February 11: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass
February 18: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer: February 11: Irene Kipp, Edith Kline, Rudy Knakal and Walter and Lynn Koch
February 18: Ashley Konyn, Joanne Lown and Doris Mack
Coffee Hour Hosts: February 11: Boy Scouts
February 18: Lenten Breakfast

This Week's Lectionary

2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 427 - When Morning Gilds the Skies
Sequence: 129 - Christ Upon the Mountain Peak
Offertory: "Be With Us Lord"
Communion: 460 - Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
Recessional: 137 - O Wondrous Type

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany (February 4, 2018)

"Unction"

Since today is Super Bowl Sunday, and since it's also the day of our monthly offering of unction (laying on of hands and anointing with oil for healing) at the end of the service, it seemed like a natural to tie them in together. I mean, think of all those injuries in football games that need healing.

But then I thought, you know what relates to us more than football injuries? The flu.

We are in the middle of a pretty bad flu outbreak. We had to cancel nursery school classes on Friday because every student but one was out sick. That's a lot of fevers.

Besides, look at today's gospel. Peter's mother-in-law has a fever - maybe the flu, which was even more dangerous back then than it is today.

But even these days, often there's just not a lot you can do about the flu. My mom had a lot of experience with it - what with six kids and all, she had plenty of opportunities to offer whatever healing she could. Which is to say, she gave us chicken soup, put Vicks vapor rub on our chests so we could breathe easier, took our temperatures with those mercury thermometers...but mostly she'd kiss us on the forehead and stay with us while we rested.

Now, you'll notice that, unlike us kids, Peter's mother-in-law did NOT get much bed rest. Jesus took her by the hand, the fever left, and she got up and served them. Ooh, that seems kind of self-serving on Jesus' part, doesn't it? Just healing her so she can serve him? Only, Jesus didn't really need to be served, did he? He's shown that when he's the host, he can serve just fine. The thing is, this time, Peter's mother-in-law - very possibly the head of her household - was the host. And in that culture, where hospitality was everything, one of the great nightmare scenarios would be to have guests and not be able to serve. To provide hospitality was everything - so Jesus healing her allowed her that dignity.

Jesus healing her wasn't really about the physical healing so much as seeing her deeper need and addressing it.

That's one of the points of the sacrament of unction which we will offer today. **It's not always about the physical healing.**

We were just working on the sacraments in Inquirers Class so we know that a sacrament is an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace.

The outward and visible sign for us is laying on of hands and anointing with oil. I do this here, at homes, and in the hospital. Not that you have to be ordained to have a healing ministry, mind you. I've known parishioners with a gift for healing - both as medical professionals and as spiritual healers.

And that is the point of Unction. It makes the connection between physical and spiritual.

The grace signified in unction is that we are healed in our souls regardless of what happens to our bodies. In fact, we're just a week-and-a-half from Ash Wednesday when we will remind each other that we will return to the dust - despite all the physical healing in the world. We will die.

This doesn't mean that physical healing is pointless. God gave us bodies to navigate for as long as we're here. It's just that as wonderful as they are, as worthy of taking care of as they are, their greatest power is being the vessel of the soul. It's good to remember that when we are holding the hand of a sick person, or giving them medicine, or helping them walk across the room.... we are primarily touching their soul.

That's one reason why quite often, when Jesus healed, he used strange terms like, "have courage, your sins are forgiven, take up your mat and walk." Or "your faith has made you well."

He knew that it is in touching the soul that the truest, deepest healing comes. That's something each of us is capable of.

So, if there's one point for you to take away from this day, from the story of Peter's mother-in-law, it is that the deepest, most important healing is always in the soul. Sometimes it involves healing the body, sometimes it doesn't, but it always starts with the soul.

Now, the disciples - who were nobody special - were sent out to heal. They learned that they had the power to heal *because* they were touching souls. That physical health is always temporary, but soul healing is eternal.

Just as *they* were sent out, so are *we*. We don't have to all be doctors to bring healing. We aren't called to make sure people all get better or live forever on this earth. We are called, however, to love, to reach out to our neighbors, to bring dignity and grace to all we encounter.

This is something we can do. And it might start by caring for someone you know who's sick (or yes, injured). Maybe someone who's been hit by this rough flu season. You can be the one to touch - and heal - their soul. But if you're sitting with someone who has the flu = wash your hands a lot. Okay? Amen.

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