

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: March 25, 2018

Palm Sunday

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This Epistle is late for a couple of reasons, but the biggest one is that I was simply running late on a lot of things. I apologize.

The other reason you may have difficulty getting this is because of the inexplicable email problems I've been having. I can send individual emails, but all my group mails have become somehow corrupted.

While I work on this, we are looking at workarounds. It may take a while - especially with Holy Week next week, but we'll get things back in working order eventually! In the meantime, we will be posting the Epistle on the church's Facebook page and, later, on the church website.

If you are not scared away from Facebook, you can join the St. James', Hyde Park group and always get news about the church there.

I would have preferred writing this week about Palm Sunday, Holy Week, or even the March For Our Lives. But sometimes, technical issues dominate our lives.

Just don't let them make us forget that yes, this Sunday is Palm Sunday, yes, Holy Week is crucial to our life together as the Body of Christ, leading us from Hosanna to "Crucify him!" - and eventually to an empty tomb.

So grant us, I plead, your patience. And walk with the whole church on this path through Gethsemane.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

GOOD FRIDAY OFFERING

During Holy Week we are being asked by our Presiding Bishop to support the Episcopal Church's Good Friday Offering.

Why is the Good Friday Offering Important?

“The Christian presence in the Middle East in a key bridge to peace-building among the faiths and ethnic groups of the region. The Good Friday Offering demonstrates our support for Christians of the region, assuring them that they are neither forgotten nor alone. By supporting their ministries of education, health care and pastoral work, we help maintain and improve relationships that are the essential foundations of reconciliation and peace throughout the region.” (from the Good Friday website)

Our Good Friday Offering supports the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East which comprise four Dioceses: The Diocese of Jerusalem, the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, the Diocese of Egypt and North Africa and the Diocese of Iran.

As Presiding Bishop Michael Curry stated in a recent letter, “The Good Friday Offering is one way we in the Episcopal Church help to support the ongoing ministry of love and compassion carried out by our Anglican sisters and brothers throughout the Province of Jerusalem and Middle East. Whether funding an eye clinic in Aden or women’s programs, schools and medical services in the West Bank, the Good Friday Offering is making a difference in the lives of so many. I believe our partnership with all who keep the faith of Jesus alive in the region where our Lord walked and began his movement is a significant aspect of our work as part of the church catholic.”

There will be Good Friday Offering envelopes in the pews beginning on Palm Sunday and available throughout Holy Week ending on Good Friday. If you write a check, please make it payable to St. James' Church with “Good Friday Offering” in the memo line.

Thank you for prayerfully considering supporting our Christian neighbors in the Middle East.

Deacon Gail

Announcements

Youth Group Bowling:

Youth Group goes bowling this Sunday, 3:00 PM! Meet at the church, and we'll drive together.

Remembering Jackie:

This week, we remember the sixth anniversary of the death of Jackie Jennings. If you were ever involved in our Sunday School, you remember Jackie's love for our kids and her leadership. Pause for a moment and offer a prayer of gratitude for her life and witness.

O Almighty God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who by a voice from heaven proclaimed, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord": Multiply, we ask, to those who rest in Jesus the many blessings of your love, that the good work which you began in them may be made perfect to the day of Jesus Christ. Grant, O heavenly Father, that we who now serve you on earth, may at last, together with them, take part in the inheritance of the saints in light; for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dutchess Community College Food Bank Needs Our Support:

Please consider supporting the students at DCC by donating non-perishable food that does not require a stove by placing your food donations into our food basket in the narthex. Any questions, please speak with Lillian Peralta. On behalf of all the students who will benefit - THANK YOU!

A PLEDGE PLEA:

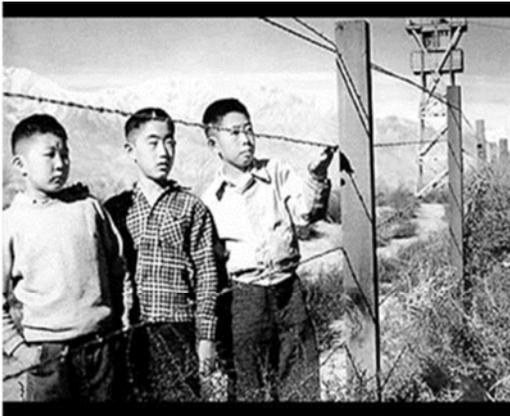
If you have not pledged yet, please do so. Letters will go out from the Vestry to remind you about your pledge. Please help!

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@diocesenyny.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.

Fireside Chat

“FDR’s Infamy: Japanese-American Internment in World War II”



Internment Camp with Sentry Tower

APRIL 5, 2018

(snow date: April 12)

Speakers:

Linda Bouchey and Al Vinck

Independent Roosevelt Researchers



Internment Camp with Guard

7 PM

ST. JAMES’ CHAPEL

10 East Market Street, Hyde Park

(across from the Post Office)

Sponsored by St. James’ Episcopal Church, Hyde Park, NY

~ Save the date and register now! ~

I Want My Church to Grow: What is Congregational Development?

Saturday, April 28, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

(Check-in opens at 8:30 a.m.)

Trinity St. Paul's Church

311 Huguenot Street, New Rochelle

This special workshop is for:

- ✓ Laypeople and clergy who want to grow a vital church
- ✓ Those who want to join God in doing a new thing
- ✓ Leadership teams working on evangelism, church growth, spiritual development

Workshop Topics

- ❖ Episcopalians Evangelize? Using Community Organizing Tools for Church Growth
- ❖ You Start with what You Have: Asset Based Congregational Development
- ❖ We Need More Money: Best Practices for Your Stewardship Campaign
- ❖ Everything Keeps Changing! Vestry 101 for the 21st Century

Cost: 1–2 people: \$10 each; 3–4 people: \$8 each; 5 or more people: \$7 each

- **We encourage congregations to bring teams of 3 or more people!**

To register online, visit www.diocesenyny.org/ednyevent/cd18-april/

Questions?

The Rev. Canon Altagracia Pérez–Bullard, PhD

Canon for Congregational Vitality

212–316–7433 or aperez-bullard@diocesenyny.org

What is Congregational Vitality in the Diocese of New York?

- Latinx Ministry
- Consulting with Congregations
- Renewal Works (2018)
- Congregational Development Commission
 - Developing/Identifying/Providing Resources (Resourcing)
 - Diocesan Training Events (Equipping Leaders)
 - Planting and (re)Development
 - Grant Programs

March 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25 Palm Sunday	26 7:30 PM Choir Practice	27	28 10 AM Morning Prayer	29 7 PM Maundy Thursday THE WATCH	30 10:30 AM Community Walk of Cross 7 PM Good Friday	31 8 PM EASTER VIGIL
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/>

March

- 25** Cathedral Congregation of St. Savior
- 26** Prison Chaplains of the Diocese
- 27** Clergy of the Diocese
- 28** Sextons of the Diocese
- 29, Maundy Thursday**
Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors of the Diocese
- 30 Good Friday**
Hospice Chaplains of the Diocese
- 31 Holy Saturday**
The New York Altar Guild and Altar Guilds of the Diocese

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, 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, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, 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), 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):	Aric Tegtmeier, Chuck Kramer and Don Ogden and Braeden Hall
Birthdays (this coming week):	Jack Kinne, Joann B. Clark, Leighann Ciferri and Douglas Belding
Acolytes:	March 25: Russell Urban-Mead and Braeden Hall April 1: Nancy Montero and Jaylen Thatcher
Altar Guild:	March 25: 8:00 AM: Shirley, Chris and Lynne; 10:00AM: Mary Gabel April 1: 8:00AM: Pat and Jan; 10:00AM: Kathy Graff and Suzann
8 a.m. Readers:	March 25: Julett Butler and Grant Ferris April 1: Lucille Ogden and Sue DeLorenzo
10 a.m. Readers:	March 25: Wendy Urban-Mead and Maggie McNamara April 1: Wilma Tully and Nancy Montero
Ushers:	March 25: Maggie and Tom McNamara April 1: Maggie and Tom McNamara
Pledge Clerks:	March 25: Andy Hall and Dean Caswell April 1: Joanne Lown and Sue DeLorenzo
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	March 25: Gabby Mercado, Isabelle Mercado and Deirdre Mae Micker April 1: Mike, Annette, Mike and Gage Minter, Nancy Montero
Coffee Hour Hosts:	March 25: Lenten Breakfast

April 1: Easter Breakfast

This Week's Lectionary

The Liturgy of the Palms

Mark 11:1-11

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

The Liturgy of the Word

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 *or* Mark 15:1-39, [40-47]

Psalm 31:9-16

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 154 - All Glory Laud and Honor

Sequence: 166 - "Sing My Tongue"

Offertory: "Hosanna"

Communion: 458 - "My Song is Love"

Recessional: 158 - "Ah, Holy Jesus"

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Third Sunday in Lent (March 18, 2018)

"Witness of Wheat"

This past Wednesday, as you undoubtedly know, thousands of mostly high school students around the country walked out of their classes for 17 minutes in remembrance of the 17 faculty and students who had been killed in the shooting rampage in Parkland Florida one month earlier. It was also a call for an end to gun violence.

This action was not without controversy.

While many school districts supported the students and their message of ending gun violence, others condemned them. Several school districts threatened students with punishments ranging from detention to expulsion (a threat that was, in fact, illegal). And when it comes to social media, the attacks - as well as the support - came fast and furious. "They're too young to know what they're talking about." "They should be in school learning instead of causing trouble." "They just wanted to skip out of school work."

Depending on where they lived, some student organizers were threatened with physical harm and even death.

Then there was the counter-movement attack. You may have seen various versions of a campaign saying, “Don’t Walk Out - Walk Up” as in, walk up to a student who feels left out and befriend them. Presumably what this campaign is saying is that it is because students are mean to each other that these mass shootings have started to increase in frequency - so it’s the kids’ own faults that they were shot?

So, why am I talking about this protest? Two reasons: First, it happens to be in the news right now. Second, it’s a pretty good example of what Jesus was talking about in today’s gospel.

“Truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

Of course, Jesus was talking about his own death. He was telling Andrew and Philip that he wasn’t there for adulation. You see, the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus may have indicated that his fame was spreading beyond Israel - that he was becoming a rock star. Jesus may have sensed that the disciples liked this popularity.

Jesus dashed their hopes of being the next big thing. He reminded them that what they were getting into by being his disciples was a world of difficulty. A world of insults, a world of threats and tsk tsk-ing by respectable people. And yes, a world of pain and death.

In short, Jesus was telling them that to follow him, there would be nothing easy or uncontroversial about it. Nevertheless, like that grain of wheat that is buried and dead, by embracing those difficulties, they would bear much fruit.

We all know how that worked out. Virtually all of the disciples suffered - many were imprisoned, beaten, publicly ridiculed, and quite often killed because what they proclaimed upset the status quo. Our own St. James was thrown from the pinnacle of the temple and beaten to death with a fullers club.

They embraced the danger of their ministries because they believed Jesus when he said that, like him, their sacrifices would bear much fruit. The fruit was increased faith in the world, a wider embrace of the God who calls us to love each other. They were willing to offer up their security for the sake of the gospel because Jesus led the way.

Which brings us back to last Wednesday’s Walk Out. Whether you agree with it or not, it is an example of people understanding the risks they were taking but feeling the potential fruit to be had was worth it. Even as they discussed the idea, the student organizers understood the resistance they would face, especially in parts of the country where gun culture is strong.

They knew they were not on some childish lark, and they knew it would require sacrifice.

Many other issues have required the same sacrifice. During the civil rights era, activists were mocked, condemned in the media, arrested, physically attacked and killed.

Before that, during the women’s suffrage movement of the early 20th Century, activists were mocked, condemned in the media, arrested, physically attacked and yes, killed.

Any time you stand up and say, “Things need to change,” you are accepting the role of a grain of wheat. Whether it is to stand up for immigrants (legally here or otherwise), to stand up for the poor, for the environment, for the mentally ill, for LGBTQ brothers and sisters ... it doesn't matter which issue you are addressing, it will nearly always require falling to the earth and dying in some way.

Jesus knew this.

He was preparing his disciples.

He was saying to them, what we are here for is worth dying for. (Not killing for, but dying for). We are here to change the hearts and souls of the Children of God, to bring them to a place where love itself becomes their motivating factor for everything - because God is love.

The word Jesus brought was that fear is not of God, hate is not of God, nationalism is not of God, greed is not of God, self-serving ... is not of God.

The fruit Jesus sought to bear was what Jeremiah called a new covenant - a covenant between God and God's people that no longer had to be written down because it was in their hearts.

That fruit - while we can feel it, while we know it's coming - has not yet come to harvest.

And so, we like Jesus, like all those activists, are called to ask ourselves what is worth falling to the earth and dying for.

We have this one week of Lent left before Holy Week. Before our remembrance of Jesus' actual arrest and death. So let me invite you to take your prayer time this week and ask this: Dear God in Heaven, what is worth dying for? What sacrifice would you ask of me? Would I be willing to bear the witness of a grain of wheat? 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.