

St. James' E-pistle

Date of Sunday Service: March 8, 2020

Second Sunday in Lent

Pulpit Notes

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

This Sunday, **March 8**, our entire Inquirers Class will be away on a field trip as they prepare for *next* Sunday when they will be confirmed and received. Each class makes a trip to a non-Episcopal church to take notes about how we differ from each other and how we are the same.

So the next time you see them as a class will be when **Bishop Dietsche** joins us on **March 15**. I want to make a special plea to you — and by *you* I mean every single parishioner of St. James'. PLEASE come. Please be here to support your fellow parishioners as they take a huge step in their Christian journey.

Please be here to welcome the bishop who is not only a fantastic preacher but also the sign of our unity as the Body of Christ. He reminds us that we are not alone, are not an isolated little community but part of something much bigger. His visitation with us is far more important than just “the boss” checking in. He is here to remind us who we are.

So please make every effort to be here!

However, there is one good reason for missing — and I promise the bishop will understand: if you are sick, please stay home. We want you to take care of yourself, and we want to make sure that nobody passes anything on to anyone else. In these days of **COVID-19 and the Corona virus**, it is important that we all pay attention to the precautions which will keep us healthy.

Last week, I posted some of the ways in which we can guard our health. Here are a few additional measures:

- The Lay Readers are undergoing a refresher course in how to hand the chalice with special emphasis on best hygiene practices.
- The bishops are discouraging the practice of **intinction**. Intinction is when someone dips the host into the wine. Many mistakenly think this is safer than drinking from the chalice, but that is not the case. In fact, it is the opposite. According to the CDC, “No documented transmission of any infectious disease has ever been traced to the use of a common communion cup.”. However, passing the host from so many hands, and then possibly dipping fingers (accidentally) into the chalice does create an opportunity for transmission.
- If you choose not to receive from the common cup, you have the option of not receiving the wine — communion is perfectly fine using just one element.

- We will provide Lay Readers with extra purificators to wipe the chalice so you can be assured that each wipe is with fresh, clean cloth.
- We encourage you to bring hand sanitizer and participate as fully as you are comfortable in the passing of the peace. If you wish to shake hands or hug, that is great (I'll shake and hug!), but please respect those who wish to simply bow to each other as a sign of peace.
- Finally, as a courtesy to others, if you find yourself out and about (say, at church) and have to cough or sneeze, please do so into the crook of your elbow to prevent the spread of germs.

As I said last week, we are mortal, made of the dust of the earth, and to dust we shall return. Because we know where we come from and to whom we return, we do not live in fear, even in times of epidemic or pandemic. We use common sense, but we do not stop living our lives.

There will be many diseases in the world — always have been. They come and go. But the eternal nature of God, and the great gift of the fellowship and grace of the Eucharist — feeds us and sees us through all such times, and beyond to the glory of the Kingdom of God.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck +

Thought for your week:

“The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not-knowing, not-curing, not-healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is the friend who cares.”

— Henri Nouwen, *Out of Solitude*

Worship This Week:

Tuesday	6:30 PM	Evening Prayer (at the Chapel)
Wednesday	10 AM	Morning Prayer (Wilks Room)
Thursday	11 AM	Bible Study
Sunday	8 AM	Eucharist Rite I
	10 AM	Eucharist Rite II

New York Haiti Project

During the season of Lent our Outreach Committee is highlighting the importance of education and our partnership with the teachers and students at St. Luke's School in Matel, Haiti.

Please check out the display case in the Parish House. Meet the teachers and their students:

Ms. Cadet - 1st year Kindergarten
Ms. Bruno - 2nd year Kindergarten
Mr. Dabrezil - 3rd year kindergarten
Ms. Debrezil - 1st grade
Ms. Thomas - 2nd grade
Mr. Charles - 3rd grade
Mr. Yaissant - 4th grade
Mr. Lapote - 5th grade
Mr. Francois - 6th grade

In addition to the classroom teachers there is a music teacher - Mr. Melusma and two administrators - Madame Yulmere and Mr. Francois.

The teachers at St. Luke's School are providing learning opportunities and hope amidst the turmoil in Haiti. Education is providing each student a pathway out of poverty and forward into a world of so many possibilities.

Originally the salaries for the teachers were to be paid by the income from the Grain Mill. And that is still the hope. Unfortunately, there has been a bump in the road and that bump is drought. Drought's impact is devastating to farmers here in the US, in Haiti, in Central America and around the world.

As you look at the envelopes in the pews with some of the children's smiling faces, please reflect upon the impact that teachers and education has had on your life over the years. Please prayerfully consider making a donation to the New York Haiti Project to support the teachers using the envelopes in the pews. Cash or checks - payable to St. James' Church; memo line: New York Haiti Project.

On behalf of the teachers and students at St. Luke's School in Matel - THANK YOU!

Deacon Gail on behalf of the Outreach Committee

If you have anything to add to the E-pistle, please contact either Fr. Chuck, Dyan in the Parish Office, or Brian Rance. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday evening. Thanks!

Yes — It's THIS SUNDAY!

So Make Sure You Set Your Clocks Ahead. You Would Hate To
Miss Church or Breakfast!



Announcements

Inquirers Class This Sunday:

This Sunday is the Last Inquirers Class of the year before the bishop's visitation **March 15**. The final session will address Church structure (who's in charge of what).

Lenten Quiet Evening:

Enhance your Lent by taking part in a Lenten Quiet Evening on **Thursday, March 19 at 6:00 PM**. The evening will be led by Fr. Masud ibn Syedullah and will include a simple potluck meal. No fee, but donations are accepted. More information to come! See the flyer below.

Newcomers Reception:

Friday, **March 20 at 6:30 PM**, all newer members of St. James' are invited to a Newcomers Reception. It is a chance to meet some of the leadership of the parish and learn what's going on and what ways you can get involved. If you are uncertain if you qualify as a Newcomer, **YOU DO!** Just let Fr. Chuck know you plan on coming!

Hyde Park Chamber Ensemble:

Friday, **March 20, at 7:30 PM**, you can move straight from the Newcomers Reception to the church to hear the Hyde Park Chamber Ensemble featuring our own Russell Urban-Mead. See the flyer below.

Lenten Sign-Ups:

Lent brings several opportunities to participate liturgically. Look for several sign-up sheets to pop up in the next week or two. Aside from signing up for our Lenten Quiet Evening, you can also sign up to read a part in the Palm Sunday Passion Gospel, the Good Friday Passion Gospel, or the Easter Vigil Salvation History. Moreover, you can sign up to sit for a shift during the Maundy Thursday WATCH.

Sound System Upgrade:

Thanks to a generous anonymous donation, our church will be undergoing a total sound system overhaul this month. It will offer greater flexibility, wireless capability, superior sound quality, and will be easier for the hard of hearing to hear. While it won't be installed in time for the bishop's visitation, it will be in place for Holy Week and Easter. This is an exciting development for our work here, and we are grateful!

March 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 9 AM Lenten Breakfast 12:00 Inquirers	9 Office Closed 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	10 6:30 PM Evening Prayer	11 10 AM Morning Prayer	12 11 AM BIBLE STUDY 3:30 PM READING ADVENTURES	13	14
15 Bishop Dietsche Visitation, Confirmation & Baptism 12:00 Reception	16 Office Closed 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	17 6:30 PM Evening Prayer 7 PM Vestry Meeting	18 10 AM Morning Prayer	19 11 AM BIBLE STUDY 3:30 PM READING ADVENTURES 6:00 Lenten Quiet Evenign	20 6:30 PM Newcomers Reception 7:30 Concert	21 8 AM Men's Breakfast 10 AM Altar Guild meeting
22 9 AM Lenten Breakfast	23 Office Closed 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	24 6:30 PM Evening Prayer	25 10 AM Morning Prayer 2 PM H P Assisted Living Eucharist 6 PM Women's Dinner	26 11 AM BIBLE STUDY 3:30 PM READING ADVENTURES	27	28

29 9 AM Lenten Breakfast	30 Office Closed 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	31 6:30 PM Evening Prayer	1 10 AM Morning Prayer	2 11 AM BIBLE STUDY 3:30 PM READING ADVENTURES	3	4
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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.

You Are Invited
To A

Lenten Quiet Evening
Thursday, March 19
6:00 – 9:00 PM

St. James' Episcopal Church
4526 Albany Post Road,
Hyde Park, NY

Please Bring a simple dish to pass
Tea, Coffee, and Water provided*

RSVP: 845-229-2820

*No fee, though an offering basin will be available for donations

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

- 8 The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry,
Presiding Bishop, and the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops
- 9 The Church of the Resurrection, Manhattan
- 10 St. Thomas 'Church, Amenia Union
- 11 Assisting Bishops of the Diocese
- 12 Diocesan Committee to Elect a Bishop
- 13 Episcopal Delegates to the United Nations Commission on the
Status of Women
- 14 Board of Directors of the Global Women's Fund of New York

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Ashley, Joe Baldwin, John Bohlmann, Justin Bohlmann, Fr. Fred Cartier, Patty Caswell, Sue Dinee, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Charles Faverio, Heather Francese, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), John and Gloria Golden, Kathy Graff, Robert Guariglia, Clifford Hallmark (father of Alyssa Raugalis), Dalton K., Edith Kline, Ashley Konyn, Hope Jennings, Rosemary Leuken, Lorraine, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Margaret, Bruce McIlravey, Andrew Mendelson, Beth and Ginerio Milano, Christine Oppenheimer, Lillian Peralta, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (deployed to the Middle East), 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): Charlessa Thatcher, David Foote, Gilbert O'Halloran, Karen Pitcher,
William Rance and Richard K. Wager

Birthdays
(this coming week): Faith Kinne, Carl Needy, Russell Urban-Mead, Richard Kuralt and
Susan Dinee

Acolytes: March 8: Nancy Montero and Maddie Glancey

	March 15: Bill Fenwick and Jack Canez
Altar Guild:	March 8: Team II March 15: Team II
8 a.m. Readers:	March 8: Debbie Belding and Lynne Koch March 15: Shannon Butler and Grant Ferris
10 a.m. Readers:	March 8: Russell Urban-Mead and Patty Drake March 15: Jim Oppenheimer-Crawford and Barbara Slegel
Ushers:	March 8: Andrew and Tonya Hall March 15: Judy Douglass and Vince Asher
Pledge Clerks:	March 8: Doug Belding and Judy Douglass March 15: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	March 8: Tom, Maggie and Amelia McNamara March 15: Gabby Mercado, Isabelle Mercado
Coffee Hour Hosts:	March 8: Lenten Breakfast March 15: Lenten Breakfast

This Week's Lectionary

Genesis 12:1-4a
 Psalm 121
 Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
 John 3:1-17

This Week's Hymns

Processional: 145 — Now Quit Your Care
 Sequence: 657 — Love Divine
 Offertory: "Take My Yoke Upon You"
 Communion: Taizé — Ubi Caritas
 Recessional: 525 — The Church's One Foundation

Last Week's Sermon

Sermon Preached on Last Sunday after the Epiphany

"Tempting (What You Give Up)"

Happy Lent. As you know, every year, we are encouraged to give up something for Lent. It is tempting to say, "That is so cliché. Why give something up? It's meaningless."

Some say, it's better to take something on than to give something up. And that is fine, as far as it goes. Of course, I decided to do both & have up checking Social Media and took on reading a novel.

But I'm not ready to give up on giving up something. In fact, lately, I've been reevaluating my position on giving something up, and I think it's value is not to be underestimated. Not because Jesus suffered in the wilderness, and so should we. And not just because the discipline is good for us.

I am embracing giving something up for Lent because I've been thinking a lot about **why** Jesus went into the wilderness in the first place. And, because it fits so well, **WHY** Adam and Eve were tempted in paradise.

If you've been at St. James 'for ANY first Sunday of Lent before, then you've heard me talk about Jesus being tempted, and you've heard me say that the purpose behind that temptation was for Jesus to figure out what his ministry was to be like. Was he going to feed the world? Was he going to wipe out all violence and danger? Or was he going to make himself all powerful ruler of the world?

I still believe that, and I believe his rejection of all three ideas was key to his real ministry of embodying God's Love.

But there's another element to both the gospel and the Genesis story I'd like to explore. The element of identity. Of figuring out who we are.

This is the same thing the story of Adam and Eve gets at. They are new and naive and trying to figure out who they are. And the serpent, representing the temptations of the world, tries to make them unsure of their place in God's life. They lose their sense of identity, and in doing so, lose paradise.

This is no idle thing. Understanding who we are at the most basic level is essential to life with God. Without it, nothing else matters — no laws, no social norms, no concerns for others. Without having a sense of who we are — without self-awareness — life is simply scrambling to survive, and nobody else and nothing else matters. It is a small, lonely life that is more truly a living death.

But working out who you are is no easy thing — it's a lifelong job in a world that would prefer you to simply survive. So there are temptations to take us away from those considerations of our identity — to distract us from really thinking about what it means to be ... us.

Those temptations can be mighty attractive. Which is the point. It's tempting to sit down and drink coffee rather than go to the gym (though I know that going to the gym makes me feel better and happier). It's tempting to eat only junk food which is easy to open and filled with yummy sweet stuff

that tastes good rather than eating healthy veggies — even though the veggies that will make me healthier and happier. It is tempting to get my news from one source only, and confirm my biases — or to not look at the news at all and live in blissful ignorance — than to engage the world around me with openness and critical thinking, even though our health and happiness as a society depends on us being informed and discerning.

All of those temptations keep us from understanding who we are and how we can best live lives that bring us into relationship with God. Like it or not, those temptations will never go away. We will forever be tempted to quit looking within. Whether it's a serpent, the devil (or Satan in Mark's gospel), or Facebook or reality TV, that easy attractive distraction will always be there.

But so will the amazing value of self-awareness. Because when we know in our very souls that we are God's beloved children, and that each person we meet is God's beloved child, it changes how we see the world and each other. It changes how we live and how we hope.

I'm not there yet. I still struggle with fully understanding my value to God. I get it here (in the head) but not so much here (in the heart).

And so I give up things in Lent — and take on things as a discipline — to practice working through the temptations of the world. To strengthen that muscle which keeps me working on who I am.

Which is why I gave up something that was distracting me from seeing myself and others for who we are, and why I took on something that will feed my soul. It doesn't matter what you give up or take on — only that you practice in a world that will tempt you to quit.

So while I'm not so sure about wishing you a Happy Lent, I do wish you a Blessed Lent which you will use to feed your souls. 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?