

# St. James' E-pistle

## May 19, 2017

### Pulpit Notes

*"Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence." -- 1 Peter 3:15*

Brothers and Sisters:

I was reading the Spring edition of the *Episcopal New Yorker* which focuses on prayer, and as I read the musings of my colleagues and their parishioners on their prayer lives, I began to think about my own. That's when I realized that I spend far too little time on prayer. Certainly, I don't talk enough about it. So, let's focus on prayer for a moment.

In my experience, I have found three theaters of prayer, three complimentary spaces in which to pray. What do I mean by that? It is important for us Christians to recognize that there is no one way to pray - and no one way is sufficient for any one of us.

And yet, most of us try to get by with just one form. Now, when I say three "theaters", think of it this way. Often, people say, "I'm spiritual, not religious. I can be with God on a walk in the woods." Others might say, "I go to church - that's prayer. I don't go in for all that mystical, solo kind of prayer." And yet another says, "I read Julian of Norwich and *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Reading is my prayer." To my mind all three forms are important: **Corporate Prayer**, **Intellectual Prayer**, and **Private Prayer**.

Let me say a little more about why each is important and complimentary to the others.

**Corporate Prayer** is the prayer we do together. I have always loved the Eucharist. Even when I am the celebrant and "working" I find times when I lose myself in the mystery of it all. This is especially true as I am saying the Eucharistic Prayer or administering communion. During that prayer, I can disappear from what is going on and find myself in another space. I can find myself - surrounded by people and in the process of speaking out loud - nevertheless lost to all around me. I have even "come to" in the middle of the Eucharistic prayer, having been somewhere else with God. Now, this isn't a weekly occurrence, although saying that prayer week after week does allow me the comfort to slip into the prayer more easily. When it comes to the distribution, there is something so powerful about looking into the face of each person who comes up, seeing the uniqueness and wondrousness of each that fills me with a love and sometimes a sense of compassion that isn't always at hand. One of the reasons I love

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seeing people at the Eucharist is because I get this incredible gift of placing the host in their hands or on their tongues - and this mundane act fills my soul.

Of course, sometimes I get to be in the congregation, and that is another wonderful form of prayer. I say the words with everyone else, but it is even easier for me to slip off to wherever the spirit might take me. You might call it daydreaming, and maybe it is, but it is a special kind of daydreaming that only happens during worship. I once went to an Orthodox service where people wandered about, came and went, and for the life of me did not seem to be paying attention to what was going on. A friend there say, "It's not about following all the words. It's about the liturgy letting you slip into the mystery." This is one of the great gifts of the church - the corporate prayer that says, "Don't focus on the formulaic words. Focus on where they take you." To the best of my experience, there is no other place this can happen than together in worship.

I find this even more now that we are worshiping together on Wednesday Mornings. Morning Prayer is not the same as the Eucharist, but it also has that mystical quality that allows us to slip away. Granted, as we are learning HOW to worship with this particular form of corporate prayer, it is a little stiff. But I already see, as people grow familiar with it, they are letting go. Together.

**Intellectual Prayer.** I worry about this term, which I coined because it isn't exactly accurate. What I mean by it is, practically speaking, reading (or I suppose listening or watching) or one-on-one conversation. It is a give and take between you and one other (whether it be the author or speaker or a spiritual director, for example). It may look like you're just taking in information, but it can be a powerful form of prayer. One ancient form of prayer is called Lectio Divina which is essentially a method of prayerfully reading scripture. You read a small passage, meditate on one word or phrase that stands out to you, pray to God about what arises from that meditation, and finally contemplate what you believe God is saying to you in this passage. It's a great approach for any reading that may help you come closer to and hear God better. One of the best things about our tradition is that we can converse with, even argue with the scriptures, always in the service of coming closer to God.

**Private Prayer.** This is the easiest and hardest form of prayer. It is easiest because nobody is going to tell you what, when, where or how to do it. Nobody is going to tell you if you're doing it wrong or right. Nobody is even going to know. And that's also what makes it hardest. Private prayer has so many forms they are innumerable. Like Intellectual prayer, you're not in a group. Unlike it, you also aren't using a book or tape or recording or other person to bounce your spirit off of. It's just you and God.

Sometimes, we use an aid to private prayer. A labyrinth, a rosary, a mantra, a hike in the woods. Whatever we use, what we're ultimately doing is getting rid of all the distractions so

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we can open up communication with God alone. It's hard work. It takes practice and encouragement.

*We human beings need all three forms - all three "theaters" of prayer. We need to worship together to immerse ourselves in the mystery. We need intellectual prayer to allow the words and thoughts of another to inspire us and carry us away to a higher place. We need that time alone with God, using whatever means works for us.*

Take some time to consider your prayer life. How to you pray corporately, intellectually, and privately? Ponder it, then pray it. It will be time well spent.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck+

### *Did You Know?*

The Episcopal Church uses a "lectionary" in worship. What's that? It's a schedule of bible readings for every Sunday. It's all preselected for a three-year cycle. After that cycle of readings is completed, it starts all over again. Each year is labeled A, B, or C. With this system of preselected readings, every Episcopal Church around the world is reading the same Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel lesson on any given Sunday.

Why have this system? Three reasons: A) It keeps us all together around the world. B) It gets us, over those 3 years, through nearly the entire bible. Go to church enough, and you'll hear it all! C) It keeps us preachers honest - this way we can't just pick the passages we like best and use them over and over. We have to struggle with passages we don't like so much!

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### **The News of the Church**

**THANK YOU!!!** A super big thanks to all who made this year's Mother's Day Tea so successful! If you want to be part of this fantastic and growing tradition, why not join up for next year's Tea? Talk to Joanne Lown!

**Men's Breakfast:** Men of St. James', our next Men's Breakfast is **Saturday, May 20 at 8:00 AM**. As usual, we will meet at Cranberry's.

**Pentecost:** Sunday, June 4 is the Feast of Pentecost. That's the day when the Holy Spirit, looking like fire, descended upon the apostles. They were empowered to speak in different languages, bringing the Gospel to the whole world. It's a tradition to wear red on Pentecost - so wear red! It's also common for the Gospel to be read in several different languages. What languages would you like to hear that day?

**Reformation Invitation:** The Christian Church in the Western Hemisphere is observing 500 years since the start of the Reformation. In the spirit of ecumenical fellowship, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Roman Catholic Church is holding an ecumenical worship to observe this dramatic change in the western church.

The service is on Pentecost **Sunday, June 4 at 3 PM**. The address is 1925 Route 82 in LaGrangeville. Hope you can make it!

**Check Out Our Welcome Video:** Have you checked out our new Welcome Video? It's important to explore new ways to reach out to people, and video is one of those ways. Go to [www.stjameshydepark.org](http://www.stjameshydepark.org) and click on the "Welcome" tab on the left. What other videos would you recommend for St. James' to make a better impact?

**Volunteer Drivers Needed!** The Hyde Park Association of Churches (HyPAC) needs drivers! The local pastors have been in contact with Vanderbilt Hotel and discovered that a pressing need for residents is transportation, especially to the food pantries and grocery store. Would you consider becoming a volunteer driver to give these rides?

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Robin Friesheim of St. Timothy's Lutheran is the coordinator for this ride-giving ministry and is seeking volunteer drivers. For now, this is just rides to the Hyde Park Food Pantry (Fridays 9:30-11:30 AM) and Reach Out Food Pantry (Fridays 2-5 PM) with each trip lasting about 15 minutes. In the future, they may tackle rides to the grocery store.

If you can serve as a volunteer driver or would simply like more information, please contact Robin at [rfriesheim@gmail.com](mailto:rfriesheim@gmail.com). Of course, you can also ask Fr. Chuck if you have questions.

May 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14 Mothers Day	15 <b>Office Closed</b>	16 7 PM Vestry	17 10 AM  Morning  5:30 Nursery School Open House  7:30 Choir Rehearsal	18   Prayer  11 AM Bible Study	10	20 <b>8 AM Men's Breakfast</b>
21 9:15 Easter Forum	22 <b>Office Closed</b>	23	24 10 AM  Morning  7:30 Choir Rehearsal	25 11 AM  Bible Study	26	27 4:00 PM Baroque Adirondack Consort Concert
28 9:15 Easter Forum	29 <b>Memorial Day  Office Closed</b>	30	31 10 AM  Morning  7:30 Choir Rehearsal			
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.						

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**ROOTS & BRANCHES**  
PROGRAMS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

*presents*

## **Agents of Peace in a Time of Fear**

**A Retreat  
June 9th and 10th, 2017**



### **Discover Your Inner Peacemaker & Reconciler**

on this retreat designed to turn back our present tide of divisiveness, conflict and inflammatory speech. Participants will reconnect with the peacemaking example of Christ and be empowered with practical methods to become agents of peace and reconciliation in their own communities.

**Co-led by the Revs. Masud Ibn Syedullah and Garrett Mettler at Taconic Retreat Center in Milan, NY.**

**Accommodations at the retreat center and all meals are included in the \$300 registration cost. To find out more and to register call 845-758-8764.**

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**Explore the Choir!** "If you have any interest at all in singing and/or playing an instrument - no matter how much experience you have - do consider participating in the St. James music ministry! You can contact St. James' Music Director Sarah Rodeo (sarodeo@vassar.edu) at any time!"

**Churchyard Committee:** Our churchyard committee wants you. The committee oversees one of the most historic graveyards in the region, and is responsible for making sure it is kept up. It handles the sale and digging of graves as well. If you value our churchyard and want it to continue to be a source of comfort whose loved ones rest here as well as historical interest to those who visit, please join our committee. If you're interested, you can contact Carol Vinall at vinehall3@aol.com.

### **Spiritual / Educational Online Resources to deepen your faith:**

- Acts 8 Movement
- GrowChristians
- Episcopal Cafe (a favorite)
- The Slate Project (not affiliated with Slate magazine)
- Virtual Abbey
- Second Life Church (gives you a virtual church experience if you're into that sort of thing. Fun to look at maybe).
- Inward/Outward (daily meditations sent to your e-mail)
- "Edge of Enclosure" (weekly lectionary-based blog post)
- The Celtic Christian Tradition (via Facebook)
- Anne Lamott (via Facebook)
- Fr. Richard Rohr's blog <https://cac.org/richard-rohr/richard-rohr-ofm/>
- Jan Richardson - <http://paintedprayerbook.com>

Especially good for those grieving or interested in women's spirituality.

## **The News of the Diocese**

**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.diocesen.org> and click under "Beliefs and Practices."

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- 21 Grace Church, Manhattan
- 22 St. Augustine's Church, Manhattan
- 23 Saint Thomas Church, Manhattan
- 24 The Canon Theologian
- 25 Ascension Day: Church of the Ascension, Staten Island
- 26 Church of the Ascension, Mount Vernon
- 27 Christ Church, Warwick

### **Praying For Peace Everywhere:**

Let us continue to light a candle for peace in the Holy Land - and everywhere. Prayer is our most potent antidote to hatred.

#### **1. Candle for Peace**

Please also light a candle on Fridays - holy to both faiths - for Peace

Let us Light Candles for Peace

Two mothers, one plea:

Now, more than ever, during these days of so much crying,  
on the day that is sacred to both our religions, Friday, Sabbath Eve

Let us light a candle in every home - for peace:

A candle to illuminate our future, face to face,

A candle across borders, beyond fear.

From our family homes and houses of worship

Let us light each other up,

Let these candles be a lighthouse to our spirit

Until we all arrive at the sanctuary of peace.

#### **2. The Mothers Prayer:**

God of Life:

You who heals the broken hearted, binding up our wounds.

Please hear this prayer of mothers.

You did not create us to kill each other

Nor to live in fear or rage or hatred in your world. You created us so that we allow each other to sustain Your Name in this world:

Your name is Life, your name is Peace.

For these I weep, my eye sheds water:

For our children crying in the night,

For parents holding infants, despair and darkness in their hearts.

For a gate that is closing – who will rise to open it before the day is gone?

With my tears and with my constant prayers, With the tears of all women deeply pained at these harsh times

I raise my hands to you in supplication: Please God have mercy on us.

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Hear our voice that we not despair That we will witness life with each other, That we have mercy one for another, That we share sorrow one with the other, That we hope, together, one for another.

Inscribe our lives in the book of Life

For Your sake, our God of Life Let us choose Life.

For You are Peace, Your world is Peace and all that is Yours is Peace,

May this be your will

And let us say Amen.

*Sheikha Ibtisam Mahameed and Rabba Tamar Elad-Appelbaum  
English Translation Amichai Lau-Lavie*

### **Please keep the following people in your prayers:**

Ruth Blanding, John Bohlmann, Helen Braun, Susie Buhalis, Mariel Carter, Dee, Linkin Ewalt, Loretta Falzarano (sister of Donna Beyer), Steven Foote, Heather Francese, Kathy Ganim, Karla Givison (Deb Belding's sister), Robert Guariglia, Harold Hall, Cath Holywell (priest in the Church of England and Indaba partner who worshiped with St. James' - undergoing heart surgery), Dalton K., Edie Kline, Ashley Konyn, Rosemary Leuken, Joanne Lynn, Doris Mack, Gordon Mackenzie, Virginia Mackenzie, Andrew Mendelson, Charles Pardee, Grace Plass, Deborah Porach, John Robinson, Rob Robinson, Jason Rodino (serving in Afghanistan), John Ross, Richard Secor, Sharon Secor (recovering from heart surgery), James Sheeky, Naomi Sleight, Patricia, (sister of Barbara Slegel), Carl Smith, Marguerite Spratt, Janice Syedullah, Tracy, Candace Vincent, Cassidy Way, Cliff Wells and Shawn Wheeler.

*Please pray for the Rev. Mitties DeChamplaign who is gravely ill.  
Pray for the repose of the soul of Irene Rokitowski.*

## **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  
(this past week): Walter Koch, Brian Kinne and Morgan Kinne

Birthdays  
(this coming week): Connie Eames and Daniel McGlynn

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Acolytes:	May 21: Team 1 May 28: Team 2
Altar Guild:	May 21: Team II May 28: Team II
8 a.m. Readers:	May 21: Lucille Ogden and Jim Smyth May 28: Debbie Belding and Thomas Finnigan
10 a.m. Readers:	May 21: Regina Ardini/Judy Douglass May 28: Patty Caswell/Mike Fenwick
Ushers:	May 21: Donna and John Beyer May 28: Dean Caswell. Audrey Horne
Pledge Clerks:	May 21: Tanya Hall and Anna Marie Pitcher May 28: Andy Hall and Dean Caswell
Parish Cycle of Prayer:	May 21: Stephanie Porach and Evan, Todd and Stephen Weaver May 28: Leslie Quick, Brian Rance, Melinda Harris and William Rance
Coffee Hour Hosts:	May 21: Deirdre Mae Micker, the Urban- Meads May 28: Brian Rance, Saira Shahani

### **This Week's Lectionary**

Acts 17:22-31

Psalm 66:7-18

1 Peter 3:13-22

John 14:15-21

### **This Week's Hymns**

Processional: 194 "Jesus Lives! They Terrors Now"

Sequence: 204 "Now the Green Blade Riseth"

Offertory: "If Ye Love Me"

Communion: 184 "Christ the Lord is Risen Again."

Recessional: 193 "That Easter Day With Joy Was Bright"

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

Sermon Preached on  
Fifth Sunday of Easter  
(May 14, 2017)

Guest Preacher, The Rev. Kevin Bean

We had a guest preacher last Sunday - there is no transcript for his sermon.