
Holy Week & Easter 2009

The Messenger

of St James' Church, Texarkana, Texas

The Most Powerful Week of the Year

My dear parishioners and friends of St. James',

We stand on the verge of the most important and dramatic week of the Christian year—Holy Week! I urge you to make this week an absolute priority in your spiritual lives.

Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 5th, is Palm Sunday, the Sunday of the Passion. At the 10am Mass (but not at 7:45am), we shall gather in the courtyard for the Blessing of the Palms and then process into the church for the sung Mass of the Passion.

In a sense, it is jumping the gun a bit to have the Sunday of the Passion before we have Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Nonetheless, the Mass of the Passion puts our week in context. The celebration of the Palms, the blessing of the procession, marks the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. And as we enter the church itself, so that sacred space becomes our "Jerusalem" for the week. I am always struck by the contrast in the mood that passes between the rather upbeat and sometimes even chaotic Procession of the Palms and the stark simplicity of the Mass of the Passion.

While I encourage your attendance at Mass every day of Holy Week, more, I would ask that you make an absolute commitment for you, your family, your households, your neighbors, your colleagues, and any others you can drag to the three liturgies on Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 7pm, Good Friday, April 10, at 7pm, and on Holy Saturday for the Great Vigil of Easter at 8:00pm.

As I say every year, I believe it is important that we recognize that these three services actually represent

one single liturgy in three acts. I am always fond of pointing out that there is no dismissal at the end of the Mass on Maundy Thursday or on Good Friday. This doesn't occur until after the First Mass of Easter on Holy Saturday night!

Maundy Thursday

The Mass on Maundy Thursday is dramatic and powerful. It begins with all the glories of a Sung Mass, including the singing of the Gloria. The liturgy and the ritual and its accompaniments are simplified as the mood changes from one of joyful celebration of the institution of the Eucharist to a realization of the events that are to follow.

At the end of the Mass, a procession is formed, and it moves slowly through the church to the Chapel, which becomes the place for the repose of the Blessed Sacrament overnight and our equivalent of the Garden of Gethsemane. Please note that there is an opportunity for you to sign up for an hour's vigil during the watch from the end of the Maundy Thursday liturgy and until Noon on Good Friday—"Could you not watch with me one hour?" Many people find this a most powerful time of silent reflection and contemplation. We like to have two people signed up for each slot through the night.

Good Friday

The Liturgy of Good Friday is stark and again startlingly powerful. The liturgy begins as the sacred ministers prostrate themselves in silence before the altar. At the heart of the Liturgy of the Word is the reading of the entire Passion story from the Gospel according to St. John. The Church prays for the needs of the Church in the world in the ancient solemn collects, and at the heart of the liturgy is the veneration of the cross, where the congregation places themselves at the foot of the

cross and bring with them their sins, their need for repentance, so that we may be saved.

The liturgies of Holy Week are “physical” liturgies. The liturgies address all our senses and we use our bodies as fully as possible in our worship. After the veneration of the cross we receive communion from the sacrament that has been reserved at the Altar of Repose.

Easter

The Great Vigil of Easter on Holy Saturday, April 11th, at 8:00 pm is the most important and the defining liturgy of the year. All other liturgies in which we participate on a daily basis find their origins in this one liturgy. On this day we all gather – I hope we all do! – to celebrate the Christian Passover.

The liturgy begins in total darkness, and a brand new fire is kindled. From that fire is lit the great paschal candle as the symbol of the risen Christ. As the fire dies down and the flame of the paschal candle comes to life, the darkness of the tomb, which the church had been the previous day, is dispelled, and the coldness of death, which we experienced in the liturgy of the crucifixion, is dispelled by the glorious warmth of the fire and light of the resurrection. It is no accident that the three stations proclaiming the “the light of Christ” occur at the same place the cross was unveiled the previous evening, thus the place of death has become the place of life. With that proclamation, the light of Christ spreads through the congregation as our candles are lit, and we stand for that wonderful, ancient hymn of the resurrection, the *Exsultet*.

And then we hear the ancient story of God’s salvation among his ancient people. At the heart of this, of course, is the story of the Passover as well as other signs of God’s covenant and this saving power in scripture.

The liturgy continues with the presentation of the candidates for baptism. Like the ancient Israelites, we, too, are led by the “pillar of fire,” the paschal candle, so that we may pass through the waters from slavery into the promised land with Jesus. Those who are to be baptized remind us all about our own renewal each year in this liturgy in the paschal Mystery, which is the Christian Passover: “Alleluia!

Christ, Our Passover is sacrificed for us!” Following this, we enter into the First Mass of Easter, when the church is suddenly transformed into a place of blazing glory with trumpets blasting and voices raised high in praise of Jesus’ resurrection. The now-famous Resurrection Party follows

Note that the Easter Vigil on Saturday at 8:00pm will be *THE* principal Easter service here at St James’ where we will pull out all the musical and ceremonial stops, including playing our new organ for the first time. There is no more thrilling and powerful few hours in the course of the liturgical year. To miss the Vigil is to miss the celebration that is at the heart of everything else we do in this place. I might go so far as to say that if we have not experienced the Vigil, we shall never fully grasp what we are involved in for the rest of the year!

As always, I would suggest to you that if you participate fully in these three liturgies with an open heart and mind, you will be changed and renewed Christian people at the end of that experience. And then, too, I would ask you to invite your friends and neighbors who do not belong to a community of faith to join you for these three days.

Nowhere is the central belief of the Christian faith more powerfully experienced than in these liturgies.

Of course, attendance at the Vigil fulfills one’s obligation for Easter Mass, but you may want to return for a second helping on Easter Day. If the Vigil is the cake, the two liturgies on Easter Day (a Low Mass at 7:45am and a Sung Mass at 10:00am) are the icing on the cake. The hymns, scripture readings and sermon will be different from those of the Vigil. You will also want to be here for the Easter Egg Hunt at 9:00 – two more opportunities for us to be together as a parish family.

Yours with every blessing,

Fr Douglas Anderson

Bishop Lambert to Visit June 7th

Bishop Paul Lambert, Suffragan Bishop of Dallas, and sometime Rector of St James,' is scheduled to visit St James' on Sunday, June 7th, 2009, to administer the Sacrament of *Confirmation* of those who have not yet received the laying-on-of-hands by a Bishop in the Apostolic Succession or to *Receive* into the Episcopal Church those who have already been Confirmed by a Bishop of the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox churches. Those who have been confirmed in non-catholic churches (such as Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, etc.) while having undergone a rite of confirmation, are not deemed to have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, which, in our understanding, only a bishop may administer.

The laying-on-of-hands confirms and strengthening the grace of the Holy Spirit for our daily life as Christians. Those who are Confirmed or Received by bishops of this are "Communicant Members" of St James' and the worldwide Anglican Communion. Communicants are eligible to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting, and to hold elected office in the congregation.

If you're interested in being Confirmed or Received, please speak to the Rector. Of course, any and all are welcome to take the class as a refresher.

ANGLICAN ESSENTIALS

Wednesday, April 15 at 6:30pm

Defining Anglicanism: what is an Anglican? Episcopalian? Catholic?

A History of the English Church (a.k.a. Henry VIII did not found the Anglican Church!).

Sunday, April 19 at 9am

Who is Jesus, and what is the Gospel?

Wednesday, April 22 at 6:30pm

Scripture & Tradition

Sunday, April 26 at 9am

Tour of the Church, Worship & Sacraments

Wednesday, April 29 at 6:30pm

The Church: One, Holy, Catholic & Apostolic

Sunday, May 3 in recess.

Wednesday, May 6 at 6:00pm

The Holy Eucharist

Sunday, May 10 at 9am

The Ordained Ministry

Wednesday, May 13 at 6:00pm

The Precepts of the Church

Sunday, May 17 at 9am

The Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven & Hell

For those who cannot attend a class, readings will be provided

Child-care is provided on both Wednesdays and Sundays.

April Birthdays

Tim Reed	1	Christy Worsham	1
David James	2	Hillary Fowler	4
Sue Hagen	5	Joyce Kern	5
Shane Malone	5	Laurel Wakefield	6
Alan Jean	8	Brian Purtle	9
Travis Power	9	Barbara Wade	10
Ed Schoen	10	Bobby Witcher	10
Mike Asher	12	Larry Oxford	13
Cynthia Hollingsworth	16	Debra Wright	17
Andrew Williams	18	Jay Young	20
Bettye Young	22	Sarah Strayhorn	23
Traci Anderson	24	Anne Douglas	25
Rachel Adams	26	Billy DeLoach	28
Michelle Purtle	28	Jim Williams	30
Mary-Stewart Shores	30		

April Anniversaries

Alice & Glenn Crowder	2
Carolyn & John Easley	5
Jennifer & Matt Gould	7
Judie & Charles Firmin	8
Sharon & Keith Maynard	9
Dolores & Tom Arnold	11
Tabitha & Tom Collins	21
Nanette & John Power	21
DeMita & bob Torrans	24
Jackie & Bob Brown	26

SCHEDULE OF EYC MEETINGS

Sun., April 5	After Church - Transition Meeting for Youth members and Parents
Wed., April 8	No Wed. Night programs – HOLY WEEK
Sun., April 12	EASTER! No EYC
Wed., April 15	6:30 PM - Jr and Sr EYC lessons from popular Bible Stories
April 17-19	New Beginnings for 7-9 grades!
Sun., April 19	6 PM Regular meeting for Jr and Sr High
Wed., April 22	LAST Wed. Night Program! We'll do something special!
Sun., April 26	LAST EYC Sunday night – Cookout or Dinner out – your choice!

EASTER FLOWERS. Special offering envelopes are in the pews. The beauty of the church for the Queen of Feasts depends on your generous giving!

EASTER EGG HUNT: EASTER DAY at 9am. We need your help once again to make the traditional Easter Egg Hunt a success! Please bring bags of candy, small trinkets or eggs to church so the youth can use them for the Egg Hunt! Thanks for your help!

NEW BEGININGS! If you are in grades 7-9 and interested in exploring your faith with others your age in a fun way, then New Beginnings is for you! It will be held on the weekend of April 17th at All Saints Camp. Contact Jennifer Gould for more information!

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN READING AT MASS? INTERESTED IN USHERING?—we'd like to add some readers and ushers at both the 7:45am & 10am Masses. In the case of readers, readings are always provided in advance. If you are interested, please send an email to sandrak@stjamestxk.org.

Some St James' History

Before her death in March, Anne Cleveland passed along a manuscript written in 1961 by LaVerne Lingold McCurry, who was asked by the then rector, Fr C.V. Westapher (Rector 1959-1961), to record some of her reminiscences about St James' history. In light of our new organ, the following will be especially interesting. Mrs McCurry writes

St James' was famous in the city for its fine music, and large crowds always attended the rendition of such well known and loved cantatas as Sir John Stainer's *Crucifixion*, usually sung each Holy Week; *The Seven Last Words*; *Olivet to Calvary*, and other lovely music.

Fr Waling (Rector 1908-1912) held the first Midnight Communion Service on Christmas Eve in 1912. The choir was composed of mixed adult male and female voices, with occasional assistance from the Sunday School Choir. I can recall as organists the names of Mr Johnny Richardson, Miss Cozia Hynson, Mrs W.A. McCartney, Miss Louse Bell, Professor Mangelsdorf, Mrs Howard Beasley, Mrs Louise Holman, and Mrs Carl Pelly among others.

An interesting entry on page 117 of the second Parish Minute Book reads

Mr F.W. Offenhauser, chairman of the music committee, reported having made arrangements for an organ recital to be given by Mrs Cozia Hynson Case on December 11th, 1921 in the church, thus making an opportunity for the parishioners and their friends to hear the newly installed Pilcher Organ. Mr Offenhauser further reported that a payment had been made to the organ company and that notes had been signed for the balance due them. It was ordered that \$100 per month be set aside as a sinking fund.

An Englishman, the Rev'd Archibald Sidders became Rector in September 1925. Many, many pages of the official parish record are filled with the various proceedings of the Vestry with architects and examinations of proposed blue prints for the erection of a new brick church upon the property. The contract was let to architects Witt and Seibert for the demolishing of parts of the wooden building and building an enlarged structure. Now began the dismantling of the organ and removal of the marble altar and all other church furniture for storage at the Hunter warehouse for the duration of the construction work. The old pews were sold to a [Black] congregation and old stained glass windows to a community church at Garland, Arkansas.

Bently and Oates got the contract for the building. Work began in May and was completed by September 1927. Pledges from all members and friends of the parish were collected. They agreed to be paid within three years—but alas they reckoned without The Depression in the financial world, so that there was much anxiety over the failure to meet bank notes, etc. I am sure that those who were present at Easter Day service in 1937 will never forget the thrill of seeing the mortgage burned in a brass pot filled with sand in the nave of the new church. □