



the evangelist

NEWS & EVENTS OF THE CHURCH OF S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

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Church of S. John the Evangelist

61 Poplar Street

Newport, RI 02840

Tel: 401-848-2561

Fax: 401-848-2562

saintjohns-newport.org

May 2009

My Dear People

I am delighted to write to you, for the first time, as your Rector. I was humbled by the Vestry's invitation to become your next Rector and I remain thankful to God for bringing us together. You will have read a short biography, printed in last month's Evangelist; so, I'll get right to it!

Beginning on the first Sunday of May we celebrated The Feast of the Invention (or Finding) of the Holy Cross. On that day, we commemorated the finding of the True Cross by S. Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great at Jerusalem in the year 326. Being led by God to a dank dark place in the bowels of the old city, for Jerusalem had been razed by the Romans in 70 A.D. as they suppressed the Jewish Revolt and dispersed the population; Helena found the remains of three crosses. Having discerned the True Cross by means of applying a piece of each to a sick person to see which had healing properties, the Emperor caused a basilica to be erected on the spot where it was found; and, for centuries it remained the principle place of Christian pilgrimage. This celebration of the sacred Tree, the one upon which Our Lord hung to redeem us from the power of sin and death, coming as close as it does this year to Easter, provided a most fitting opening to my first month in Newport.

However, it doesn't stop there, nor should it. May is also the month dedicated to Our Lady. May 10th, Easter IV, we will dedicate this month and ourselves to the Lord's most holy Mother, with Marian hymns, a procession to the Shrine of Our Lady and culminating with her being crowned with a garland of roses. As he hung upon the Cross, Our Lord said to his Mother, "Behold thy son" placing her into S. John's care. At that moment, the holy and immaculate Mother of God became our mother too. Charged with the care of the Church by the Lord, Our Lady is the one to whom we may seek for assistance in all of life's woes. She intercedes with her Son for us; and, we must respond to such love and care with our own dedication to her.

Here at S. John's we are very much aware of our duty to S. Mary. After all, as Our Lord was commending us to his Mother's care, so too he was commending her into S. John's care. "Behold thy Mother." The Beloved Disciple, the one who was closest to Jesus, was given the honour and responsibility to provide for Our Lady; and, while it is true that the Apostle represents all of humanity we cannot help but feel somewhat more responsible as members of a congregation under his patronage. Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, is given to us and how we care for her is indicative of our dedication and love for Our Redeemer. If the heart is full of love for the Mother of God it cannot fail to be overflowing with love for her Son. As parishioners of this church dedicated to S. John, I know we are especially motivated to care for our Mother and for all the children she holds dear in her heart.

In Catholic parishes, such as ours, this month is colloquially called "Procession-tide" due to the many opportunities we have of processing around the church. If we take advantage of the options for a procession, including the Invention of the Cross and the Marian Festival, we can have as many as four processions on Sundays and one on Ascension Day. Rogation Sunday, Easter V (May 17 this year), has a unique character in that it has a penitential aspect and we go outside the church building (weather permitting). After the Mass is completed, we change to violet vestments and singing the Litany of the Saints, process outside the church. This is sometimes associated with the 'beating of the bounds', a ceremony which took place in rural areas in order to bless the farm fields as the growing season got underway. Most places use the Rogation Procession as a vestigial form of this event, stopping outside and blessing the church garden. I'll be praying for good weather on that day and I hope you will too!

May 21st is the fortieth day after Easter, the Feast of Our Lord's Ascension. Ascension Day marks the departure of Jesus' physical presence from this world, taking our humanity to its rightful home at the Father's side. We will celebrate this Holy Day of Obligation at 6.00 p.m. with a Procession and Sung Mass.

The Feast of Whitsunday, or Pentecost, falls on May 31st; and, what better way to end our month than with the birthday of the Church herself. Fulfilling the promise of Our Lord that he would be with us always even to the end of the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon those assembled in the upper room empowering them to go and make disciples of all nations. The fire of God's presence alighted upon the Apostles and drove them out to all corners of the known world proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of God and that those who believe in Jesus might have life in his Name. That fire, that inspiration, is what we all earnestly seek. Each year we celebrate Whitsun, asking the Holy Spirit to "fill the hearts of thy faithful people and enkindle in them the fire of thy love." May the fire of God set us on fire with love; and, may we be driven, as the Apostles were, to spread the Good News to others.

So then, May is a very busy month, more so due to this being my first month as your Rector. We're going to be busy, in addition to the real business of the worship of God, getting to know each other. One of the immediate consequences of my arrival will be the celebration of daily Mass. With the exception of Monday, which will be my day off, Mass will be offered at 12:15 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays; Thursday will continue to see the 10:00 AM healing Mass, and Saturday Mass will remain at 9 AM. Of course, the Daily Office will continue as it has always done. S. John's is known as a "Full Faith" parish which includes full Catholic privileges, i.e. daily Mass, Asperges at High Mass, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Confession, Stations of the Cross, etc. I intend, with God's help and your participation, to maintain these privileges; so that our parish will continue to be known as a leading Catholic parish not only in this Diocese, but well beyond.

As we begin our life together, I ask for your prayers. As we get to know one another may we grow in love toward each other in and through our blessed Redeemer. In doing so, we will become a shining beacon of Catholic Truth in a world grown indifferent to Christ. I'm ready to begin our life of faith, hope and charity together. I hope you are too.

*Affectionately, Your Friend and Pastor,
(The Rev'd) R. Trent Fraser, SSC*

Dear Friends & Parishioners,

On behalf of The Vestry, I'd like to express my deep felt thanks to all who helped make Fr. Fraser's first Sunday with us a truly joyous celebration. I sincerely hope we will continue to see all of you in the weeks and months ahead and that the many needs to our parish may be met with enthusiasm. Please consider how you can help and be sure to contact either myself or Jono, or by e-mailing the church office.

I would also like to thank everyone who made Holy Week and Easter such a special and spiritual journey - including Fr. Burger, the choir, the Altar Guild, Acolytes, and those who sat watch through the night on Maundy Thursday and through the day on Good Friday.

*Your Senior Warden and Friend,
Charles White*

Dear Friends in Christ,

My three children are now quite grown – at least, at the ages of 16, 18 and 21, they aren't exactly children anymore. Of course, they will always be my children; one of God's greatest gifts to me was the opportunity to hold them in my arms just moments after their births, and to tell them with the ineffable joy of the new father, that I would love them forever.

That I do, and will continue to do. From time to time I have been angry with them (surprise!), and from time to time I have honestly even disliked them. I have, however, never, ever, stopped loving them. As they have grown, however, the most interesting and rewarding interaction I have had with them has been in their progress – oftentimes their struggle – in discovering *who they are*.

I know who I wanted them to be; perfect reflections of the best qualities of their father, spiced with Nobel Prizes, Fulbright Scholarships and cancer cures. In the real world, God has blessed me by allowing all three of my children to grow thus far without serious injury, irreparable legal problems, or academic expulsion. And for that I am more than grateful.

In truth, we as Christians spend our entire lives in the ultimate search for *who we are*. Yes, we know that we are baptised into the Resurrection, and that certain behaviors on our part fulfill our obligations as followers of Christ. But to the true believer, every day is an opportunity to grow in the search for who we are in our discipleship in Christ.

Now, at this time at S. John's Church, we are presented with a unique and singular opportunity to define who we are, both personally as individuals, and corporately as members of the Body of Christ in this place. We can do this by our response to God's grace, and by remembering that over the last three years, *God the Father has not abandoned us – not once, not ever*. From time to time he has been angry with us, and from time to time he has honestly even disliked us. He has, however, never, ever, stopped loving us.

Allow me to ask a personal question; With respect to our Lord and Saviour, who are you as an individual? Who are we corporately? And more to the point, what does this mean for the future of S. John's Church?

Of these three questions, none has an immediate answer, nor should they. They are part of the process of discovery – the ongoing process of growth and development of each of us, both individually and as corporate members of the Body of Christ. I pray that each of us will meditate on these questions in the coming days, weeks and years. In those meditations and the resulting discoveries lies the future of this Parish, and the future of the Catholic Church both here in Newport and in the world.

Yours in Christ,
Jono Babbitt

DAILY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Sunday

7:30 AM Mattins
8 AM Low Mass
10 AM Sung Mass
5:30 PM Evensong

Monday

9 AM Mattins
5:30 PM Evensong

Tuesday

9 AM Mattins
12:15 PM Mass
5:30 PM Evensong

Wednesday

9 AM Mattins

12:15 PM Mass
6 PM Choral Evensong

Thursday

9:30 AM Mattins
10 AM Healing Mass
5:30 Evensong

Friday

9 AM Mattins
12:15 Mass
5:30 PM Evensong

Saturday

8:30 AM Mattins
9 AM Mass
5 PM Confessions
5:30 PM Evensong

Summary of Vestry Notes: Meeting of the S. John's Vestry - 10 March 2009

- ❖ The meeting was called to order and opened with a prayer by the Junior Warden. Present were officers Jono Babbitt (Junior Warden) and Ed Carnes (Treasurer); Vestry members Shirley Channon, Cheryl Abney, John Garagliano, Frank Jenks, and Pel Boyer; and guest Ty Creason of the DRI. Charles White, Mary Lou Chase, and Jay Jacot were absent. The Junior Warden spoke on the importance of the upcoming feast of the Annunciation and of attendance by the Vestry.
- ❖ A written Treasurer's Report was distributed and received with thanks. The parish has experienced a small net loss (~ \$3,700) which should be offset by expected reimbursements. All bills received have been paid. Pledging is \$1,325 ahead. One of 3 estimates from carriers for Fr. Fraser's move has been received.
- ❖ Junior Warden's Report: Charlie is in Florida until next month and is in frequent contact with the parish. The feast of the Annunciation on 25 March will be celebrated by Fr. Burger. Fr. Fraser's installation will not be 6 May as originally planned - no new date has been set as yet. He still plans a brief visit in late March. All wedding inquiries are being forwarded to him. Work on the organ is progressing - no major issues remain.
- ❖ Committee Reports: Summer Fair: There is still no chairman, however Ann Boyer and Lisa Babbitt have indicated a willingness to handle the administration of the live auction. Hospitality: A social event in honor of Fr. Burger is being considered.
- ❖ Old Business: ~ Forensic Audit: The Wardens and Treasure met with the auditor who simply presented a tabulation of the data originally supplied and a bill for services rendered. The Treasurer responded to the bill with a written request for assessment of findings. There has been no response. Ty Creason recommended that the parish leave any further action to the DRI. ~ South Porch Roof: Leaking is worsening and urgently needs inspection by a roofer.
- ❖ New Business: ~ DRI Convention: Jay Jacot was appointed as a second alternate (per agreement by phone). ~ Remarks by Ty Creason: The parish being now on the point of installing a new rector and having, in the view of the DRI, stabilized its affairs, he will be less frequently present at meeting. He remains our point of contact with diocesan staff.
- ❖ The meeting was adjourned with a prayer by the Junior Warden for GERALYN WOLF's mother, who is ill.

Saint John's - Images

Good Friday - Stripped Altar



Easter Flowers



NOTICES

ENGLISH CHOIR VISIT - CHRIST COLLEGE

Plans are continuing apace for the visit of the Choir of Christ College, Cambridge. They will offer Choral Evensong on Saturday, July 4th and Mattins, Mass, and Evensong & Benediction on Sunday, July 5th. As in the previous English Choir visits, we will be seeking housing for approximately 30 singers and clergy. Save the dates!! and do contact Jono if you have an interest in offering housing or helping in other ways.

WOMEN'S GUILD

The Women's Group will meet on Thursday, May 14th in the Guild Hall at 6:30 p.m. All women should attend to discuss the Women's Group's participation plans for the Summer Fair coming in August. We will need help with plants for the garden and support of our part of the Secret Garden Tour, which is to be held on June 19, 20, and 21st. We will be supporting this event by providing water for sale and hosting use of the Guild Hall restrooms. Plans are to provide (for sale) a light bag lunch for visitors, as well.

SUMMER FAIR - DONATION REQUESTS

The date of St. John's 2009 Summer Fair is Saturday, August 1st, and it certainly is not too early to start thinking of items in your garage and attic for donation to either the "White Elephant" or clothing tables, or the silent or live auction. We will also be soliciting donations from local businesses and individuals for auction . . . great offerings are use of vacation homes, specialized services, or tickets to concerts or sporting events. Please contact Lisa Babbitt or Ann Boyer at SummerFair@saintjohns-newport.org or in person with any offerings. Also be sure to let us know in what way you would like to help - there is much to do!! (*and many hands . . .*) Thank you.

E-MAIL DIRECTORY: The following may be reached at xxxx@saintjohns-newport.org

Fr. Fraser: *Rector@* ~ Charlie White: *SWarden@* ~ Jono Babbitt: *JWarden@* or *Choirmaster@*
Ed Carnes: *Treasurer@* ~ Pel Boyer: *VestryClerk@* ~ Jay Jacot: *Verger@* ~ Web Master: *SJWeb@*
Evangelist submissions or comments: *TheEvangelist@* ~ Fair: *SummerFair@* ~ General: *Office@*

A SAINT FOR MAY ~ St. Bernardine of Siena



In the year 1400, a young man came to the door of the largest hospital in Siena. A plague was raging through the city so horrible that as many as twenty people died each day just in the hospital alone. And many of the people who died were those who were needed to tend the ill. The man had not come because he was ill but because he wanted to help. And he brought young men like himself willing to tend the dying. For four months Bernardine and his companions worked day and night not only to comfort the patients but to organize and clean the hospital. Only at the end of the plague did Bernardine himself fall ill — of exhaustion.

But that was Bernardine's way — whatever he did, he put his whole self into it. Immediately after he recovered he was back caring for the sick — but this time, for an invalid aunt. For fourteen months she got his full attention. After his aunt died, Bernardine started to think about where his life should be going. The son of a noble family, he had been orphaned at seven, and coming to Siena to study, threw himself into prayer and fasting to discover what God wanted him to do. One might have expected him to continue his work with the sick but in 1403 he joined the Franciscans and in 1404 he was ordained a priest.

The Franciscans were known as missionary preachers, but Bernardine did very little due to a weak voice. For 12 years he remained in the background, his energies going to prayer or to his own spiritual conversion and preparation. Then he went to Milan on a mission, and when he got up to preach his voice was strong. Thus began the missionary life of one whom Pope Pius II called a second Paul. As usual, Bernardine threw his whole self into his new career. He crisscrossed Italy on foot, preaching for hours at a time, several times a day. His special devotion was to the Holy Name of Jesus. Bernardine refused several cities that wanted him as bishop but he was unable to avoid being named vicar general of his order. All his energy during that period went to renewing the original spirit of the order. Soon, however, Bernardine heard the call to go back to preaching which consumed his last days. As a matter of fact, even when it was clear he was dying, he preached 50 consecutive days. He died in 1444 at almost 64 years old. His Feast Day is **May 20th**.