



the evangelist

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

inside...

PARISH NOTICES
DEVOTIONAL
LECTIONARY
CALENDAR

DATES TO NOTE

September 8th:
Vestry Meeting

September 9th:
Choral Evensong &
Parish Supper

September 29th:
Feast of St. Michael
and All Angels

... be looking ahead
for our Fall Train Ride
sometime in October

**Church of S. John
the Evangelist**

61 Poplar Street

Newport, RI 02840

Tel: 401-848-2561

Fax: 401-848-2562

saintjohns-newport.org

September 2009

My Dear People,

After a rather cool start to summer, August turned out to be rather hot and steamy; and, according to the weather forecasters September could be more of the same. This prediction is predicated upon the emergence of El Nino, the warming of the eastern Pacific waters which in turn affects the weather in our part of the world. I'm told that Newport weather in September can be warm anyway; but, I hope that we will not be stuck in a stifling pattern for too long. Perhaps it's my northern genetics, and being raised in north central Ontario, Canada but I do not do well with heat and humidity. However, all else about this part of the world has been and continues to be a never ending discovery of the beauty of the geography and the friendliness of the people. It's what distinguishes us here at S. John's. Well that and our ability to throw unbelievably fun and delicious dinners at the drop of a hat. In the almost four months that I've been here, I can't count the many superb cooking events I've enjoyed. From receptions to coffee hour, to pot-luck dinners, I am constantly amazed at our ability to gather for fellowship together - a testament to our dedication to service of our neighbour which comes out of our love and dedication to the worship of God in this place.

This is the month of the Holy Cross, so called because of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th. This feast, commemorates the recovery of the Holy Cross from the Persians by the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in 627. The celebration of the return of the Cross to Jerusalem was led by the Emperor himself, only after he had cast aside his costly robes and sandals and walked into the city carrying that most precious relic. It also commemorates the day in 1241 when King Louis IX of France (St. Louis), brought the instruments of the Passion, together with a portion of the Holy Cross to Paris and began construction on the marvelous repository for the Cross, Sainte-Chapelle.

Holy Cross also marks a change of the liturgical season. It signals the looming end of Trinitytide, as we celebrate Michaelmas at the end of September, Harvest Thanksgiving, St. Luke and Christ the King in October, All Saints, All Souls, and our Feast of Consecration in November. We look at all these events through the lens of the Cross; for, without the Cross all of this would be pointless. The opening of the prayer for the Society of the Holy Cross, [SSC] the priestly fraternity founded in 1855 by Fr Charles Lowder of St. Peter's, London Docks, is the exclamation of all faithful Christians: We should glory in the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection, through him we are saved and made free. This is true for us here at S. John's. All that we do, whether it is in the solemn celebration of the Liturgy, in the quiet petitions at our shrines, at our parish dinners and receptions, fairs and other examples of hospitality to our community, must be done with our eyes fixed firmly upon the wood of the Cross.

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Whatever trials or tribulations, sorrows or disappointments we encounter in the course of doing the will of God must not be dwelt upon, but given over to the Cross. There is a phrase we sometimes use in the SSC, which I believe can be used in our challenges here: Dig a pit for the Cross. We ought not to be surprised if there are obstacles in our way, temptations which seek to draw us away from what we are doing for Christ in this place. We must take all such challenges and give them over to Our Lord and his Cross. We are digging a pit for the Cross so that we can reach out to those who come through our doors and transform them, leading them by joy which is the good news of the Catholic Faith.

This can only be done if we are willing to take up our Cross and follow after the Lord. What this means is varied and specific for each person. Understood at the parish level, however, it means we must take our rightful place in the life and work of S. John's. That means being present every Sunday at Mass unless prevented by illness or travel out of the area. On special occasions, holy days of obligations, Christian Education opportunities, etc., our parish leadership needs to be present. If the Wardens and Vestry show little interest in the activities of our Parish, how can we expect anyone else to think it is important? This is especially true when it comes to Feast Days. I can tell you from experience there is nothing more disappointing than to plan a wonderful Mass with a reception following and have very few parishioners present. From what I've seen so far, I can tell that S. John's does a good job of turning out for such things; but, there is always room for improvement.

An opportunity to invite friends and well wishers to S. John's comes on Tuesday, September 29th, the Feast of S. Michael & All Angels, commonly called Michaelmas. There will be a Sung Mass at 6.00 p.m. with a reception following. I am delighted to announce that Father Robert Bader, SSC, has consented to be our guest preacher that evening. Fr Bader is known to many at S. John's, and I hope you will be present to greet him as we give thanks for the ministry and intercession of the Captain of the Heavenly Army.

I've been asked about the possibility of some form of adult Christian Education opportunities and I'm encouraged by the interest in it. There are a few questions which need answering first, though and this bears thinking about before we embark on a programme. Elsewhere in this edition of the newsletter, you will see some of the options we have available. Please let me know what appeals to you.

I am very happy to have the opportunity to pray the Rosary corporately once again. We have a good group of people praying with us usually on the first Saturday of the

month. However, I have been asked about the possibility of having the Rosary with more frequency and I think this is a wonderful opportunity to deepen our devotion to Our Lady and to ask her intercession for the ministry and work of S. John's. Starting in September, we will be offering the Rosary every Saturday after the 9.00 a.m. Mass. That way we will have the opportunity to meditate on all the Mysteries of the Rosary; but, more importantly, we are opening ourselves up to loving Our Lady more thus, in turn, coming closer to Christ through meditation on the mysteries of our redemption. Perhaps this will also lead to a renewed interest in the Society of Mary which has begun to reclaim its place as a Catholic devotional society here in the United States after some confusion about its purpose previously. The Rosary is a powerful tool for prayer and evangelism; so, I'm glad we will regularly add our devotions to that of millions of others who pray the Rosary around the world.

Earlier, I mentioned the Annual Synod of the Society of the Holy Cross which will take place in Belleville, Illinois from Tuesday, September 15th through Friday the 18th. I will be making the trip via automobile, combining some sight seeing in Chicago on the way out, and some visits to Council Members of the Guild of All Souls in Illinois and Ohio on the way home. Thus, I shall be away from the Parish from September 9th through the 20th. While I am away, we will have the services of our good friends Frs Ed Winsor, Peter Spencer and Douglas Burger. Fr Spencer will be taking a few masses on Thursday and one on Saturday, with Fr Winsor pitching in when he can. Fr Winsor will celebrate the 8.00 a.m. Mass on the 13th and 20th of September; Fr Burger will celebrate at the 10.00 on those Sundays. I am very grateful for their help; and, I know they enjoy their association with S. John's a great deal. With the exception of the Thursday and Saturday Masses, however, the daily Mass schedule will be suspended from September 9th until Tuesday, September 22nd.

Looking ahead, please plan on bringing your pets to S. John's on the first Sunday of October, which just happens to be the occurrence of the feast of S. Francis of Assisi. After the Sung Mass that day, we will bless animals in honour of the saint. I hope we will spread the word and have some of our friends and neighbours on the Point bring their pets for a blessing and a meet and greet. I always enjoyed this popular devotion, and I hope we can have as many animals as possible. Look for more information in next month's letter.

Affectionately, Your Friend & Pastor,
Fr. Trent Fraser

FOR S. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS

From a sermon of S. Bernard of Clairvaux, Celebrating the Saints.

Today we observe the feast of the angels, and you wish me to preach to you a sermon worthy of the occasion. But how can we poor earthworms speak worthily of angelic spirits? Most certainly we believe that they who stand in the presence and sight of God enjoy the good things of the Lord for all eternity. But concerning those good things as Scripture says "neither eye has seen, nor has ear heard, nor have they entered into the human heart." So how can a mere mortal speak of them to other mortals given that we have neither knowledge to speak of them nor the ability to understand?

The mouth speaks from the overflowing of the heart; if the tongue is silent, it is from lack of thoughts. But even if the splendour and glory of the holy angels before God is beyond our comprehension, we can at least reflect upon the loving-kindness they show us. For there is in these heavenly spirits a generosity that merits our love, as well as an honour that evokes our wonder. It is only right that we who cannot comprehend their glory should all the more embrace their loving-kindness in which, as we know, the members of the household of God, the citizens of heaven, the heirs of paradise are so exceedingly rich. As the Apostle says, "They are all ministering spirits, sent out in the divine service for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation."

So let nobody think this incredible, given that the creator and King of angels himself came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life for many. It would be strange to reject the idea of the angels' service, when he whom they serve in heaven himself leads the way in serving us! One of the prophets saw them serving God in heaven, and declared: "Thousands of thousands served him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him." And another prophet when speaking of the Son says: "You have made him a little lower than the angels." So indeed it was that the One who surpassed all in majesty, chose to conquer through humility: superior to the angels, he chose to be made inferior to them in their service.

You may ask, "Why does his coming to serve us make him lower than the angels when they too are sent to serve?" the answer is that he is lower in that he not only served us, but allowed us to serve him. Also the angels render service out of that which is not theirs, presenting to God our works, not their own and bringing to us his grace. That is why when Scripture says "the smoke of the incense ascended before God out of the angel's hand," it carefully tells us that there was given to him much incense. In other words, it is our labours and tears that the angels are offering to God, not their own; and it his gifts and not their own that they are bringing back to us. Thus the Servant who presented himself as a sacrifice of praise, and in offering his life to the Father, still gives us his flesh today, is both lower than all others, but also much higher.

So let us avoid everything that might grieve the holy angels, and instead, if we would enjoy their intimacy, cultivate those things that would please them. There are indeed many things that would please them; for example, being moderate, being chaste, giving up things voluntarily, praying with sighs and tears and with a heart full of loving ardour. But more than these the angels of peace desire in us unity and peace, for these are things that characterize their own commonwealth, and when they see such things produced in us, they marvel at the birth of the new Jerusalem on earth.

NOTICES

THE FAIR HAS COME / THE FAIR HAS GONE

The St. John's 2009 Summer Fair once again did itself proud with lots of visitors passing through and leaving with treasures and full stomachs. The estimated net income is right around \$5,000 - a bit lower than last year, but in line with 2007. There are certainly too many to thank, so we offer a general THANK YOU to all parishioners and parish-friends who helped pull it all together on a hot summer day. Plans are already being discussed for 2010 - scheduled for July 31st. If you have some inspirations, please be sure to pass them along . . . e-mail summerfair@saintjohns-newport.org. With our Rector now in place and a full committee formed, 2010 promises to be even bigger and better, but the support of the entire parish is paramount, so mark your calendars now!

PARISH SUPPER - - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH:

As noted in Father's missive, our Choral Evensong services will resume on Wednesday, September 9th followed by our monthly Parish Supper. Benediction will resume on the 23rd. Please join the *Schola* in experiencing this beautiful and peaceful service . . . a balm to a hectic day.

GUILD HALL USAGE:

St. John's has a wonderful resource in its possession in the form of our Guild Hall. The Hall is available for use by parishioners, as well as outside groups for a fee. There are forms available in the office that should be submitted for any planned use, as well as a master calendar posted in the hallway outside the office.

A look in the rear view mirror...

A couple of weeks ago in the Dinner Train kitchen I overheard a conversation between a 17-year old dishwasher and a forty-something sous-chef. The older man indicated that he would give "anything" to be 17 again. I must have laughed, because he turned to me and said "wouldn't you?"

The answer, both then in the moment and now, after some deep consideration, is no.

Don't get me wrong – I was very happy at 17, and for that matter at 18, 19, 20 and so on. I am deeply fulfilled and happy now. Why then, would I not want to be 17 again?

Because I know how the plot unfolds. I know the good and the bad; I know the mistakes and missteps; I know the joy and the grief. But to look back at 17 is to look back into the rear-view mirror.

What excites me about now – about where and who I am right now – is that by the grace of God I have the opportunity to go forward into unknown territory. And, again by His grace, I know that what He has prepared for me to do will be a fulfillment of His will for me and for my family. I trust in that grace, and look forward to it. To do otherwise is to deny the power of God in my life, and to live in the reflection of the rear-view mirror.

There are, of course, manifold dangers associated with living in the rear-view mirror. It is obviously hard to look ahead and watch the road if your attention is focused aft. It is possible – even likely – that you will run off the road if you are focused on that mirror. In the larger scheme of God's will for us, it is possible, and again even likely, that we will run off His road and fail to see His plan for us, both individually and collectively as a Parish family.

Where are you looking? To be complete and successful and fulfilling of God's will for us, there is only one place upon which we can focus, and that is in the future that He has set before us. The past is history. It cannot, and frankly should not, be forgotten. But it should only inform our future decisions, and should not occupy our energies or our emotions as we work for the fulfillment of God's Kingdom here in Newport. To dwell on our history is to deny the power of God in our life, and to live in the reflection of the rear-view mirror.

My prayer for S. John's Church is that we are all – each and every one of us – looking forward, and not living in the rear-view mirror.

In Christ's Peace, Jono Babbitt

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES IN THE AUTUMN

There has been some interest expressed in starting an Adult Christian Education class in September. The suggested time was on Sunday between the Masses. However, with a very tight window between our current Mass times of 8.00 a.m. & 10.00 a.m., any class would end before the next Mass began. I believe it is important to be present for both Coffee Hours, thus eating into time which might be used for a class. The normal class time for such events is usually, on Sunday that is, about 45 minutes to an hour. So what are we to do?

One way of allowing for a class on Sunday is to move the Sung Mass time to 11.00 a.m. This had been the Mass time in years past; and, it would allow time for the Coffee Hour after the 8.00 a.m. Mass and the class. Another plus would be less hurry between Masses, more Choir practice time (not that they are in need of any more time, being excellent already!) and the Angelus would be sung at the end of Mass seeing it would be just after Noon. Another option would be to end the practice of preaching at the 8.00 a.m. Mass thus allowing more time to be squeezed into a class of about 45 minutes. Although it appears preaching at 8.00 a.m. has been the norm over the last 15 years or so, I am told that wasn't always the case in our past. Some may find this an improvement, some may not. However it would remain very hurried between the two Masses. Finally, we could try something along the lines of a Rector's Forum which would allow for about 15 minutes of Coffee Hour after the late Mass then adjourn for education. The drawback is that those who would be interested from the early Mass congregation would be less inclined to participate seeing they would have to either remain for the second Mass or return later. In effect that would limit Christian Education to those who attended the Sung Mass.

Of the three options for Sunday adult Christian Education presented above, I am inclined to lean towards the first because of the opportunity for a less stressful and hurried time between Masses on a Sunday morning and the inclusion of as many people as we could manage from both Masses. Due to my having to be away over two Sundays in September, attending the Annual Synod of the Societas Sanctae Crucis (SSC) in Illinois and a little time away in Chicago and Cleveland, I would anticipate beginning a class either at the end of September or early October.

Of course, we may opt not to have a class on Sunday at all, but arrange a weekday Education opportunity, such as has also happened in the past. People have mentioned Thursday night to me as one day when such activity took place. I am entirely open to that option either as or in addition to something which takes place on Sunday. What are your thoughts?

Kalendar and Intentions for September - The month of The Holy Cross		
1	S Giles, Abt.C	Churchwardens & Vestry
2	S Stephen of Hungary, KC	The Church in Eastern Europe
3	S Pius X, PC	Adherence to Traditional Faith
4	Monthly Requiem	September Chantry
5	Of Our Lady	Pilgrims to Our Lady's Shrines
6	TRINITY XIII	Parish
7	feria	
8	NATIVITY BVM	Society of Mary
9	S Peter Claver, C	The Poor and the Oppressed
10	S Nicholas of Tolentino, C	Renewal in Preaching
11	feria	
12	HOLY NAME OF MARY	
13	TRINITY XIV	Parish
14	EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS	
15	SEVEN SORROWS, BVM	
16	S Cyprian, BM (<i>Ember Day</i>)	
17	Stigmata of S. Francis	Franciscan Order of the Divine Compassion
18	Ember Day	
19	Ember Day (<i>Vigil</i>)	Bishops, Priests and Deacons
20	TRINITY XV	Parish
21	S. MATTHEW, Ap.Ev.	
22	feria (<i>Votive of the Angels</i>)	Protection from evil
23	feria (<i>Votive of S. Joseph</i>)	The Universal Church
24	OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM	The Shrine at Walsingham
25	feria (<i>Votive of the Holy Cross</i>)	Society of the Holy Cross (SSC)
26	Martyrs of North America	Martyrs Shrine, Midland, Ontario
27	TRINITY XVI	Parish
28	S Wenceslas, KM	
29	MICHAELMAS	S. Michael & All Angels, Denver, CO
30	S Jerome, CD	Catholic understanding of Holy Scripture