

February 28 2019

“Our mission is to celebrate God’s transforming Love in Jesus, by following where Jesus’ Love is calling us to serve the community”

On Sunday, March 3

— 8 am Said Eucharist

—10 am Sung Eucharist

Sunday School meets in the Undercroft at 10am

—11:15 am Coffee Hour

Fr Bill Baker will be our celebrant.

—2:30 pm Service at Lakeside Manor

—6 pm AA meeting

Inside this issue:

—“More on Forgiveness” Fr Bill’s message

—Lenten programs and how we will arrange our schedules while Fr Bill is serving two churches as Priest.

—suggested reading for Lent from Fr Bill

—Meetings and Events for the next few weeks

—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper announcement



Ascension This Week

**More on Forgiveness
— from Fr. Bill Baker**

I have been sick this week, so my sleep schedule has been a little off. On Monday I slept the entire day and a couple of nights I have been awake with a fever or coughing. When I cannot sleep at night I like to watch that crime television network, Investigation Discovery or ID. For some reason, watching reenactment of crimes at night, puts me to sleep. I am not sure what that says about me, but I just know it works.

This week I watched a full episode about how this couple was kept hostage in their home while three young boys robbed and harassed the couple, tearing apart their house. Finally, the couple attempts an escape and the husband stabbed one of the young boys in the melee. After being stabbed, the young boys fled the scene. The next thing that happened shook me to the core. Before they called the police, the husband, who had just been beaten, robbed and whose house was ransacked, asked his wife to pray for the boys with him.

He understood the power of forgiveness. On Sunday, I preached a sermon based on the lectionary readings about forgiveness. I suggest that when we forgive we cannot change the past, but by making the choice to forgive, we can change the future. You can listen to that sermon on our Facebook page and I hope you will. I would like to suggest another reason why we might choose to forgive.

When we forgive we unburden ourselves. Think about it this way. When we harbor grudges, feel angry with someone or are just unforgiving, it can feel like we are carrying part of the person who hurt us on our backs. We might actually respond physically. Our anger and unforgiving hearts can actually weigh heavily on us and I have read about people getting physically sick or causing themselves physical pain. The man from the crime show actually said by forgiving the boys, it helped in his own healing from the incident.

I can remember when I used to use the services of a certain massage therapist. She was intuitive and really sought to offer healing in the world as part of her massage practice. Depending upon the tightness in my muscles or where the tightness occurred (my shoulders, lower back, hips), she would ask me about my stress level and sometimes ask me if I was holding a resentment against someone. She amazed me with her skill and intuition. *(continued next page)*

Thus, I believe that we can burden ourselves with our unwillingness to forgive. But I also believe, more importantly, that we can unburden ourselves by forgiving. For me, besides that Jesus asked us to do it, unburdening ourselves of anger and our grudges towards others, marks another good reason to forgive someone. The husband in the television program also understood this.

Of course forgiveness is a choice and it takes a lot of work. I often write these newsletter articles realizing that they will bring up as many questions as answers. I do that intentionally. As Christians we need to do the work. If all of this seems difficult to you, start with prayer. I can also suggest a book or two on forgiveness or feel free to talk to me. We both might have something to share with one another about our knowledge on forgiveness. Forgiveness IS a choice, but the result of that choice will change our life and make us healthier, stronger, more faithful Christians!

Blessings, Fr Bill+

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No exceptions.** 
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Brunch at the Hilton was a small group due to illness of a few who had planned to attend. From left: Linda Gibney, Bill Sorensen, Fr Rand Frew, Nancy Marsiello, Laura Wonica, Barbara Krause, Fr Bill Baker, and Beverly Sorensen.

Suggested reading for Lent from Fr Bill on the subject of the poor:

The Problem with Wealth: A Christian Response to a Culture of Affluence by Elizabeth L. Hinson-Hasty
(This is the book I mentioned in my sermon)

Always with Us?: What Jesus Really Said about the Poor by Liz Theoharis. I read another book in this series about racism and it was really good.

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond

Rich Christians in the age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity by Ronald J. Sider. This book is a little dated because it was written in 1978, but there is an updated version from 2015.

Where is Fr Bill??

Ash Wednesday, March 6: Fr Bill will conduct services at St. John's at 8:00am. At 9:30am he will conduct an Ash Wednesday service at Ascension. Then at 7:00pm we will have a joint service of both churches at St. John's for anyone who could not make it to either of the morning services.

Fr Bill will work out of the office at St. John's all day on Mondays and half days on Wednesdays after mass and coffee hour at Ascension.

Fr Bill will work at Ascension on Tuesday and Thursday full days and half days on Wednesday mornings.

In addition, Fr Bill has been asked to rotate weeks at Ascension and St. John's during Lent. This rotation will continue until Palm Sunday. Fr Bill will be at Ascension for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. The week after Easter, he will be on vacation.

Lenten Study Program this year – from Fr Bill's recent newsletter article:

"For our Adult Forum/Lenten Series during Lent we will use a program called "Following the Way of Jesus" published by the Episcopal Church. My seminary classmate wrote the curriculum and I participated on the committee for the IPC that chose to use this for all the Episcopal Churches on Staten Island this year. Ascension will have two chances to participate each week—on Thursday evenings beginning March 7 at 7:00pm in the Rectory and on Sunday mornings after Coffee Hour beginning March 10.

On Thursday evenings, Cindy McCloskey and I will offer a lite supper of homemade soup and bread, as part of the Lenten Series. Since I will only be at Ascension every other week, I am looking for one or two people to be co-leaders of the Sunday morning group. I will assist in all the planning and participate in the Lenten Series when I am at Ascension. If you are interested, please let me know soon."



When: Please join us on Tuesday, March 5th at 6:00 pm for a delicious Pancake Supper served with sausages, fruit and coffee!

Where: Church of the Ascension, 1 Kingsley Avenue, Staten Island, 10314

Free will donation - Please see Roy Williamson if you expect to attend, or call the office at 718-442-4187 no later than March 4th!

Save the Date: Upcoming Events for Richmond Episcopal Ministry:

Tuesday, March 5: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Ascension. *See details above.* Join us wearing "Mardi Gras" costumes or bright clothing with beads. We bought lots of beads. The children will take down the Alleluia Banner, box it and hide it. On Easter when we can say Alleluia again they will bring it out and hang it on the Pulpit.

***Thursday, March 7:** Adult Forum/Lenten study begins on at Ascension, 7pm in the rectory. A light supper will be served. Meetings continue through Lent.

Saturday, March 9: St John's will hold a St Patrick's Day dinner fundraiser. Time is 6:30PM, tickets are \$30.00. Event includes a DJ, 50/50 drawing, and basket raffles.

***Sunday, March 10:** Adult Forum/Lenten study begins after coffee hour. Meetings continue through Lent.

Sunday, March 31: Annual IPC Joint Lenten Service at 4PM. Location TBA.

*You can choose one or attend both. *See more information on preceding page.*

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