

The Abundant Life

January 8, 2015
For Sunday January 11th

From Jerry DiNoto

Feast of the Baptism of Jesus

As we commemorate the Baptism of Jesus, we definitively end the Christmas Season.

Yet as we contemplate Baptism, let us not get spiritually stuck with signs and symbols. Although water is important to the sacrament, it is more important for us not to give the physical water a sense of power (for we know God ALONE is all power), but rather to look to the spiritual reality of the meaning of the sacrament. Remember that a sacrament is an outward sign instituted by God to give grace" In other words an external sign with an internal reality. So let's concentrate on the reality—What does baptism mean?

The meaning of baptism can be found in the four letters of the word RICE.

* Rebirth. In baptism we are born again by water and the Holy Spirit. In

other words, we die to the world of physical distractions and spiritually

rise to the reality of who we really are— Made in the Image of God.

* Initiation. At baptism we are initiated into the understanding that faith is worked out within the context of community, and we have become

part of that community.

* Consecration. In baptism we consecrate and dedicate ourselves to seek

and to spread the kingdom of God by how we live and by who we are.

* Empowerment. At baptism the Spirit comes into our lives with the self

realization that we are empowered equipped, strengthened to demonstrate

God's love in every human situation we encounter.

Reviewing and renewing our Baptismal Promises is an opportunity for us to

realize and claim our rebirth, our spiritual initiation within this community, our consecration and our empowerment. Jesus' baptism was not just a question of what he could receive but very much a question of what he could contribute to the cause of the kingdom of God on earth. John F. Kennedy's saying, "Ask not what your country can do for you, rather ask what you can do for your country" can also be applied to our relationship with God with one another and with our community.

Let us ask ourselves as people of faith: What are we doing, each one of us, to promote the Love of God? What can we do? Can we consecrate and dedicate ourselves more deeply to the service of God— just as Jesus did? Let us, with Jesus, renew our Baptismal promises and consecrate ourselves to the work of God's healing and transforming Love— firstly within ourselves and then to others.

Jerry DiNoto

Featured Scripture

Mark 1:4-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw

the
heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a
voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am
well
pleased."

Faith Formation

"Sundays at 9:15"

In The Library

Welcome to The Episcopal Café Discussion Group! Sessions will be held
in
the Chapel Room in the Parish Hall. These discussion/sharing sessions
are
based on online topics from Episcopal websites,

1/11 The Anosognosia of Racism Facilitator: Br. John Charles

Read the article [1]here

1/18 Transgender Priest Rachel Mann Made Minor Canon at

Manchester Cathedral Facilitator: Craig Ewing

Read the article [2]here

1/25 Annual Meeting: No Café session

"Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the Library"

Christian Mysticism & Mystics

1/13 Teihard de Chardin. Led by Craig Ewing

1/20 Julian of Norwich. Led by Br. John Charles Westaway

1/27 de Caussade / Evelyn Underhill. Led by Rev. Andrew Green

"Christmas at Roy's Desert Resource Center"

It's never too late! For the past several years, St. Paul's has
raised
money to buy Christmas gift cards for the residents at Roy's Desert
Resource Center. Each Roy's resident received a \$25 gift card that can
be
used to purchase clothes and other essentials at a local retailer.
Please
join in showing your support for this important outreach with a
donation
– simply make your check payable to "St. Paul-in-the-Desert" and put
"Roy's Christmas" in the memo line. Drop it in the plate on Sunday or
bring it to the church office Our target this year is to raise \$2,500

by
the end of December, so please give early and give often!"

REPORT MISCONDUCT

As part of our ongoing commitment to creating a safe haven for everyone, our diocese trains people in the prevention of misconduct and encourages all to report misconduct. All reported incidents are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and confidentially. If you believe you have experienced misconduct of any kind, please contact the John Seitman, at jseitman@pacbell.net or 858-793-4426.

At the Church
of St. Paul
in the Desert

. . . we welcome all worshipers to a place free of violence, bullying, and abuse. Physical, verbal or emotional violence against others or against oneself is not acceptable because of our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. Please let Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself be your guide.

A WELCOMING, EMPOWERING, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Our mission statement calls us to be "a welcoming, empowering and supportive community." We are currently forming a new ministry at St Paul's to support that mission. Volunteers are needed from all three services to donate approximately 90 minutes of their time per month. That time is split into 3-30 minute segments: 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after the service you attend, once per month, to support the Welcoming Table located in the Narthex and another 30 minutes a month assisting with name badge organization. If you are able to lend a hand, please contact Mike Funke at 760.-409.0986 or mike.funke@yahoo.com!

Help us live our mission statement!

Bullying Behavior Not Welcome Here

At St. Paul in the Desert we welcome all worshipers to a place that is free of violence and bullying.

Physical, verbal or emotional violence against others or against oneself is not acceptable.

[3]"It Gets Better" is a series of video messages to encourage Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender youth and let them know that they are loved as they are.

[4]"A Blessing for Those Who Are Bullied" was written by the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, a Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

It is not enough to say "NO" to bullies. It is important to stand up for people and to provide resources for those who have been the targets.

Our Partnership

with

Katherine Finchy

Elementary School

. . . continues through our donations of classroom supplies. Please take a blue classroom supply wish list, available from the ushers, [5](or view and print), to use when you go shopping. Please place your donations in the basket marked "Katherine Finchy Elementary" located in the Narthex. You may also bring your purchased supplies to the Church Office during business hours. If you are unable to shop, but would like to help financially, please make your check out to "St. Paul in the Desert" and write "Katherine Finchy" on the memo line.

Announcements

Need to Print a Copy of

The Abundant Life?

[6]Click here to receive a Printer Friendly (text only) version[7].

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Please observe that the office is not open for walk-ins on Mondays. If you call, please leave a message. In case of emergencies, a priest will return your call.

A Celebration of Life will be held for Patti Minton-Sivcovich on Saturday, February 28, 2015 at 11:00 AM here at the Church of St Paul in the Desert.

Christmas isn't over 'til the decorations are put away. Please join your fellow parishioners Friday, January 9th at 9:00 am to help take down the decorations and pack them away for next year.

A new opportunity for rewarding service begins next month:

St. Paul's Adult Literacy Ministry

is open to all interested volunteers. No teaching experience is needed to participate. The first training session will be held Saturday, February 7, 2015 at 9:00 AM in the St. Paul's small conference room. Please watch for further information in upcoming Sunday bulletins.

Save the Date

Sunday,

February 8, 2015

at 4:00PM.

The Church of St. Paul presents a concert with Mark Thallander on organ and Peter Green on piano. The program features piano and organ duets based on familiar hymn tunes. For more information contact Director of Music, Nathan Ensign at 760-320-7488 X 225.

Taize Services return on Thursday, February 5th at 7 PM in the Church.

A BENEFIT
FOR THE
FRIENDS OF ROY'S
FOUNDATION

Friday,
January 16th at
7:30 PM

The Church of St. Paul will present the Plymouth State University Chamber Singers from New Hampshire. Under the direction of Dr. Dan Perkins, this 21 voice choir will sing a program with works by such known composers as Whitacre, Bernstein, The Beatles, Part and others. Donations are graciously received at the door and a reception will follow to welcome singers and community guests.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

(FORMERLY "GODLY PLAY")

NEEDS --> YOU

We are looking for volunteers to be Story Tellers and/or Doorkeepers (observers) for our Sunday School program during the 10:30 service. This is an opportunity to teach children through biblical readings and activities selected by the Sunday School Team from an Episcopal curriculum. If you are interested in volunteering or want more information, please contact Ted Barjas at 760.902.1014.

HOLY COMMUNION

SERVICE

FOR

LOCAL CARE FACILITIES

Holy Communion at Windsor Court, 201 South Sunrise Way, Palm Springs,

is hosted by the Nursing Home Ministry on the second Wednesday of the month, next, on January 14, at 10:15am. The Presiding Priest always welcomes assistance from parishioners.

COFFEE HOUR CELEBRATION

Coffee Hour following the 10:30 AM service is hosted by Lena and John Granet in honor of their third anniversary and John's 70th birthday.

Please consider signing up to host a Coffee Hour in 2014. A binder at the entrance to the Parish Hall indicates available Sundays throughout the year. There are several Sundays available through the end of the year. If you have questions, call Ray or Cheryl Kelley at 760.778.1725.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry invites you to join our circle on Wednesday's from 10am -1pm in Hogarth Hall. Whether you wish to learn to knit or crochet or are an expert needleworker, we welcome you. Needles, hooks and yarn are provided. Please drop in to create and enjoy our prayerfully made creations.

Episcopalians Against Gun Violence

. . . is an ad-hoc group of bishops, clergy and lay people disseminating information about Episcopalians who are working, collectively and individually, to curb gun violence. For further information, click [8]here.

References

1. <http://therevchrisyaw.blogspot.com/2014/11/the-anosognosia-of-racism.html>
2. <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/transgender.priest.made.minor.canon.at.manchester.cathedral/37934.htm>
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPZ5eUrNF24>
4. <http://scg-wakeupcall.blogspot.com/2010/10/blessing-for-those-who-are-bullied.html>
5. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Finchy-Supply-list.pdf>
6. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/The-Abundant-Lite-January-2-2015.pdf>

7. <http://stpaulsps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/The-Abundant-Lite-5-8-2014.pdf>
8. <http://www.facebook.com/EpiscopaliansAgainstGunViolence>