

Frankly Speaking

March -April 2007

Easter, Year C

St Paul's Episcopal Church, Woodville, TX

Break Down the Walls; Come, Know Jesus (Holy Ghost Power)

PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK

Lent draws to an end with Holy Week. The Holy Week services are some of the most moving you will ever attend. The impact is greatest when you attend all of them, for you then get a very strong sense of the last days of Our Lord's earthly life.

April 1: Palm Sunday 9 a.m. We begin with the Procession of the Palms, parading from the parish hall into the church for the lessons of Palm Sunday, then read the Passion Narrative, the story of the rest of Jesus' last week of earthly life.

Wed., April 4: Tenebrae, 7:30 p.m. This is a series of readings with candles being put out until the church is dark, symbolizing the sin and darkness of the world before Jesus redeems it and us.

April 5: Maundy Thursday service and agape meal, 6 p.m. This is the night of Jesus' Last Supper and when he took the lowliest servant position to wash his disciples' feet, showing the humility and attitude of servanthood he expects from us. In this service, the priest washes the feet of those in attendance who wish to participate. Following the eucharist, the altar is stripped, symbolizing Jesus' treatment at the hands of the religious and secular authorities. This is a very moving experience. The Reserved Sacrament is then set up in a designated area, called "The Garden of Repose," and volunteers take turns



St Francis enjoys the azaleas in bloom

spending an hour or two in prayer overnight, as Jesus asked his disciples to "wait with me an hour" while he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane before his arrest.

The agape meal is a simple meal following the service. "Agape" is a Greek word meaning the self-sacrificing kind of love that God has for us and wants us to have for each other.

Friday, April 6: Stations of the Cross and Good Friday Liturgy, Noon. In the Stations of

the Cross, we follow Jesus on his journey to Golgotha, also called Calvary. The Good Friday liturgy recounts the hours of his suffering and death. The most solemn and mournful hours of the entire church year are on Good Friday from noon to 3 p.m.

Friday, April 6: Stations again at 6 p.m. For those who cannot attend the noon service, and those who wish to attend again.

Saturday, April 7: Easter Vigil 8 p.m. Most Protestants think that Easter begins at sunrise on Sunday, but it actually begins at sundown on Saturday. This is the first celebration of our Risen Lord, beginning outside with a fire and processing into a darkened church to bring the Paschal Candle, The Light of Christ, to the people. *This is the most powerful moment of the entire church year.*

April 8: Festive Holy Eucharist on Easter Sunday, 9 a.m. Hail Thee, Festival Day! Blest Day that art Hallowed Forever! Joyful, Joyful! We Adore Thee, God of Glory, Lord of Love!

CONFIRMATION

On January 28th, Bishop High made his annual visitation and confirmed or received six new Episcopalians attending St Paul's.

Confirmed:

George Standley
Hannah Montgomery
Lee Cone

Received:

Urbano Gonzales
Janice Montgomery
Woodie Cone

Nick Lucas was unable to be present for confirmation on January 28th, and was instead confirmed on February 25th in Galveston.

FR. STEVE'S SCHEDULE

Fr Steve will be out of town the following days:

Tuesday, April 10, through Wednesday, April 18

For emergencies, contact the Rev. Dorothy Gremillion at St. Luke's Episcopal, Livingston, or the Rev. Tommy Williams at Woodville United Methodist.

NOTE: The church office will be closed on Monday, April 9th and Monday, April 16th.

WHAZZUP? Upcoming Events

Apr 1: Palm Sunday with the Passion Reading

Apr 4: Tenebrae, 7:30 p.m.

Apr 5: Maundy Thursday 6 p.m. with Agape meal after

Apr 6: Stations of the Cross and Good Friday Liturgy, 12 noon

Apr 7: Stations of the Cross, 6 p.m.
Easter Vigil 8 p.m.

Apr 8: Easter Day Festive Holy Eucharist

Apr 10 - 18: Fr Steve on vacation

Apr 22: Deadline for May newsletter submission

May 13: Mother's Day

May 27: Pentecost Sunday

May 28: Memorial Day

June 3: Trinity Sunday

June 17: Fathers Day

Submit your information on upcoming events to be included in the next newsletter!

DIRECTORY UPDATE

CHANGE

Norma & Tom Wiseman
email: twiseman9@sbcglobal.net

ASK FR. STEVE

Q: Why do you ruin Palm Sunday by doing the other reading and ending it on such a "downer" when it started out so glorious?

A: Before the Industrial Revolution and the rise of Protestantism, people used to attend all of the Holy Week Services

Now, many people attend Palm Sunday and nothing more until Easter, thereby missing the entire Passion of Christ. That is why the prayer book recommends Palm/Passion Sunday, to capture some of Holy Week for those who would otherwise miss it.

Q: How can you expect me to attend all those services during Holy Week? I have a busy life and it really is asking too much.

A: Good thing Jesus didn't look at it that way, isn't it?

Q: Frankly, I also find Good Friday to be a real downer. What's wrong with skipping from a glorious Palm Sunday to a glorious Easter Sunday? Aren't you always saying Christianity is a celebration?

A: The value of Holy Week is that it offers us the opportunity to walk with Jesus in his final days among us.

In the Anglican tradition, we believe each Sunday is not just a re-creation of the original Lord's Supper (which is Maundy Thursday) but a re-remembering of it in the literal sense: putting it back together, restoring it as the

original, not a copy.

Imagine, then, how powerfully we remember or restore it as we celebrate the evening it is instituted. Yes, "is," not "was," for we are experiencing it with Christ and the disciples in God's Time, outside of our time.

But that is not the end of the story, nor even the last chapter. How many of us will pick up a highly-recommended book and read only the first, middle and final chapters? If we skip Holy Week, it's like skipping the meat of the book.

We need to experience the Passion of the Christ, and this is our opportunity. When we eat with him, go to the garden with him, see him stripped and whipped, follow him to Calvary, feel his death and mourn at his tomb, THEN we are really ready to celebrate the miracle of his resurrection!

We are Episcopalians. We are a liturgical church. "Liturgy" means "the work of the people." We do not only *talk* about Jesus, we also do the work of re-remembering Jesus, of putting flesh on him. We offer him our selves and he uses our flesh to be his Presence in the world. As inadequate and broken as we are, he chooses to use us!

Break down the walls. Come, know Jesus.

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME....

I don't know how many of the congregation read all of the newsletter, but I hope everyone, so I won't keep causing such confusion with my name.

I was born Janice Elaine Montgomery. Period. I used the Biblical name, Ruth, for the prison ministry, which I thought was more appropriate. When Hannah found St Paul's, and saw the love and compassion, and felt the Holy Spirit, I wanted to come with her. She introduced me as Ruth, which had become a part of our lives. Like James being Jim, or Charles being Bubba.

However, legally, and on documents and identification, I am Janice. So I thought, erroneously I guess, that since that people around Woodville where I work and where I do business, know me as Janice, I would sign up for Cursillo as my legal name. And I told Father Steve, Janice is preferable since that is how I am best known.

So you can use either name, because I go by both, and answer to either.

Shalom,
Janice "Ruth"

THOSE CRAZY EPISCOPALIANS!

Why do they do that?

Why do some people “cross” themselves? What does it mean? How do you know when to do it?

“Crossing” oneself is an ancient practice, an outward sign of praying in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In fact, the sign is the shape of the cross formed on one’s own body. At the words “in the name of the Father,” you touch your forehead to symbolize the Creator from whose mind all creation sprang. At “and the Son,” you touch your heart to symbolize Jesus living in you (“come into my heart, Lord Jesus”). At “and the Holy Spirit,” you touch your left chest, then your right chest near the shoulder joint, to symbolize the Holy Spirit enfolding you in his love and protection. If you go to an Orthodox church, you will see people making the Holy Spirit sign from right to left instead of from left to right. That’s the “eastern” tradition, which is older than our “western” tradition and probably what was done in the early church. But that’s ok. Jesus loves us all just the same.

So if you choose to cross yourself, the most obvious time to do it is when somebody says “in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

Other phrases appropriate for crossing yourself include “Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” which we hear at the beginning of the service, and “in the Name of the Lord,” which we hear during the Great Litany, in the Sanctus (“Holy, holy, holy Lord...”), when we say “Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord.”

What other times?

- Near the end of the blessing of the bread & wine, when the priest says “sanctify us also.”
- When we pray for the departed.
- At “I believe in the resurrection of the dead” during the Creed.
- At the elevation of the bread and the wine, when the priest says “this do in remembrance of me.”
- After both have been blessed, when the priest lifts both and says “The gifts of God for the people of God.”

Of course, crossing yourself is not limited to specific times in church. Your private prayer time may be made more meaningful by doing so.

The act itself can be a prayer, too. Some people find it a natural response to a serious or scary situation, such as when passing – or escaping! - an auto accident, hearing about a tragedy in someone’s life, or hearing an ambulance or fire siren. It is a physical prayer for the person in distress. God understands and doesn’t need our words, just our hearts.

If you would like to try it but are afraid you might not know how to do it “right,” practice during your private prayer time. If you don’t feel comfortable crossing yourself in church, don’t. Our Father who knows all, knows what is in your heart and that is sufficient.

WHAZZUP? Upcoming Events 2

Holy Week

Plan to attend the full Holy Week Schedule.

- Palm Sunday, April 1
- Tenebrae, April 4, 6 p.m.
- Maundy Thursday, April 5, 6 p.m.
- Good Friday, April 6, noon Stations of the Cross, 6 pm
- Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 7, 8 p.m.
- Easter Sunday, April 8

Cursillo

Upcoming Cursillo dates in 2007 are June 14-17, August 2-5 and November 1-4.

If you are interested in attending, please see Fr Steve or anyone who has already attended.

Your Event Here

If you are part of or planning an upcoming church event, please provide the information so that it can be included in the newsletter! Just put your information in the newsletter mailbox in the parish hall, or email it to Fr. Steve at <frstephen@sbcglobal.net> or to Nancy at <nksecaur@yahoo.com>

WHAT ARE EASTER EGGS ALL ABOUT ?

Here are a few of the many traditions.

In the Jewish Seder, (the Passover meal which was the Last Supper), a roasted or hard-boiled egg primarily symbolizes the first Passover sacrifice, as related in the Book of Exodus. It also symbolizes the "festival offering" brought to the Temple in Jerusalem, as well as mourning for the destruction of the second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E. by the Romans. Finally, it implies God’s desire to deliver His people from slavery in Egypt. Other symbolic meanings include fertility, the cycle of life, Springtime, and rebirth.

In Christian tradition, eggs were a no-no during Lent and

on fast days, so an egg on Easter Sunday was a real treat! Hard-boiling was a means of preservation to avoid wasting food.

If you are interested in learning more about the Passover, the Seder, or just plain ol’ Easter eggs, here are some websites.

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_egg
- <http://www.holidays.net/easter/eggs.htm>
- <http://www.angelfire.com/pa2/passover/passoverseder.html>
- <http://www.wf-f.org/Seder.html>
- <http://www.christianseder.com/seder.html>

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Quick Peek at Upcoming...

Apr 4: Tenebrae, 6:00 pm

Apr 5: Maundy Thursday, 6:00

Apr 6: Good Friday; Stations of the Cross & Service at 12:00 noon; Solemn Hours, noon to 3 p.m. Stations of the Cross again at 6:00 pm

Apr 7: Easter Vigil, the first celebration of Easter, 8:00 pm

Apr 8: Easter Sunday Festive Eucharist. The Lord is Risen!

GRAY PANTHERS, MARCH 16



Relay for Life Fundraiser with a St Patrick's Day theme.
Woodie wears his Irish heritage proudly.