
the
Messenger

April, 2009

A newsletter of the Parish of St. John's in the Village

224 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10014 212/243-6192 Fax: 212-604-0688

[www: stjvny.org](http://www.stjvny.org)

Sunday Eucharist at 8:00 & 11:00 am; M-F: Morning Prayer at 8:00 am; M, W, F: Eucharist at 6:15 pm

Coming Up In April

- April 2 - May 21** Thursdays with the Old Testament:
Two Years Before the Earthquake: From Amos the Prophet to Amos the Book
4:00 in the Parish Hall
- April 5** Palm Sunday - Deadline for Easter Flower donation submissions.
- April 12** First Official Easter Egg Hunt Following the 11:00 am Service
- April 13** Easter Monday - Office Closed
- May 15 & 16** Parish Retreat - Holy Cross Monastery

The Schedule for Holy Week Appears on Page 5

Bells for the Easter Vigil

The congregation is cordially invited to bring a bell to ring prior to the singing of the GLORIA at the Great Vigil of Easter. The psalmist said "Make a Joyful Noise" and with your help, we can raise the roof!

The only requirement is that your bring something to wrap the bell in so it cannot sound should it be accidentally disturbed during other parts of the service.

From the Rector's Desk

My dear friends,

I write to urge you to consider attending the liturgy of Tenebrae on Good Friday, April 10, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Church. It is the perfect way to conclude Good Friday, and along with the Good Friday Liturgy, it composes a complete reflection on the events of the Passion.

Tenebrae is a consolidation and anticipation of the Daily Office for the last three days of Holy Week. Monks and nuns took the psalms and canticles and prayers from Mattins and Lauds and strung them together to make a liturgy which is sung by anticipation on the three preceding evenings. Thus, the liturgy for Maundy Thursday was sung on Wednesday evening, that for Good Friday was sung on Thursday, and that for Holy Saturday on Friday.

The name means darkness. That name is probably derived from the very ancient ceremony of extinguishing the lights in the church as the service proceeds. In our situation, the church is dark, except for a set of seven lights arranged on a holder called a hearse. The liturgy consists of readings from the Holy Week lectionary, as prescribed above, and canticles and psalms. The rite concludes with Psalm 51, and a very dramatic noise which symbolizes the death of Christ and his descent into hell or the earthquake which shook the city at the moment of the Lord's death.

The liturgy contains some of the most beautiful, exquisitely wrought acapella anthems in the Church's musical tradition. *In Monte Oliveti* is a tightly woven piece of renaissance polyphony weaving together the themes of the Lord's temptation and our own. The *Velum templi* draws a careful analogy between the earthquake and the death of the Lord and rending of the temple veil, which also proclaims the resurrection of the dead, anticipating the Easter mystery. *Sepulto Domino* anticipates the burial of the Lord, which we commemorate at the Holy Saturday liturgy the next day. The themes and devices of anticipating, analogous proclamation and interweaving themes reminds us of the essential wholeness of the Holy Week rites and the interrelationship of these important aspects of our salvation.

At a personal level, Tenebrae contains one of my favorite lines in all of the liturgy.; It comes from a text called the Song of Hezekiah, from Isaiah 38:10-20.

*My life is rolled up like a bolt of cloth
The threads cut off from the loom.*

That one line seems such an apt description of the human condition: we are separated from the source of our life; we hover at the point of disintegration; we distort God's designs in our soul and the labors of our own creation come to naught. Very powerful words and every year they come back to me with renewed meaning.

If you have not been to Tenebrae, give it a try. Even if you have come to the noon liturgy, consider coming back for Tenebrae. And remember, since it is a liturgy which does not involve communion, it is a perfect liturgy to which to bring a non-Christian friend. Anyone can bask in the flow of the good music, reflect upon the clarity and simplicity of the chant, and consider the symbolism of light turning into darkness.

All in all, it is just one of the best.

Faithfully,



Vestry Report

Both the Valentine's Day Dance and the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper were well attended and a good time was had by all. The Vestry is planning more dances, so watch for announcements.

The first annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for this Easter, so invite all the children you know between the ages of 2 and 12. The Blessing of the Animals will be held on Sunday, May 17.

The Vestry is having a Planning Conference in June. We will be discussing growth here at St. John's as well as future events and opportunities for fund raising.

Remember, there is a Vestry person on call after both Sunday services. Your

suggestions and comments are reported to the Vestry at our monthly meetings.

Soup Kitchen

In addition to St. John's ministry in the Canterbury Club/ NYU, several parishioners also volunteer at St. Ignatius helping in their Soup Kitchen. Here is some info from them that you may find interesting.

The Soup Kitchen at St. Ignatius is our longest continuing ministry and has been serving two meals a week to those in need for 25 years. There are 32 volunteers serving regularly each month, together with students from Trinity High School, with another 15 or so substitutes on the roster. Two thirds of these volunteers are Ignatius, while one third are friends from the community who sought us out as an opportunity to serve. These volunteers serve approximately 250 guests per month, on Saturday afternoons and Monday evenings, a menu consisting of some combination of soup, tuna salad sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, fruit juice, fruit cocktail and cookies. At Christmas guests are typically given something to help keep them warm such as socks, gloves, scarves or hats. From time to time volunteers or members of the community have contributed hand warmers, fresh fruit, crates of Girl Scout cookies and other items that make a special treat. The fourth Saturday of the month can use some additional volunteers.

In March 2009 we marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Soup Kitchen. It is a remarkable tribute to this

community that for a quarter century members of the church and of the wider parish community have served meals to the hungry in our City and practiced fulfilling the Great Commandment.

For further information contact Carol Quatrone or e-mail the parish office at pthompson@stjvny.org

Easter Egg Hunt

This year the Vestry approved our first official Easter Egg Hunt after the Easter 11:00 am Eucharist. It will be open to all children ages 2 to 12.

Help is needed purchasing supplies, set-up on Holy Saturday afternoon and/or Sunday morning, and supervising at the event. A sign-up sheet will be provided, or contact Pam Brown.

But most importantly, tell all your friends and neighbors!!!

Easter Flower Donations

Don't forget that Palm Sunday, April 5 is the deadline for submissions for Easter flower dedications. Envelopes were mailed along with the Rector's Easter letter and are also available in the back of the church on Sunday.



“STAY AWAKE WITH ME”
(Matt. 26:38)

“Could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.” (Matt 26:40)

Here at St. John's we have a tradition of keeping an all-night vigil from Maundy Thursday until Good Friday. After the service on Maundy Thursday, the remaining Eucharist is brought to the Altar of Repose where it remains until the noon service on Good Friday. People are asked to “keep watch” at one hour intervals (the late night hours are hardest to fill, but security is provided). Join us for this unique opportunity to share in the profound significance of Holy Week. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Common Room



Confessions:

If you would like to make a confession to a priest please speak to one of the priests who will be glad to schedule an appointment for a confession. If you have not made a confession before, speak to the rector who will help you learn how to do it and how to benefit from self-examination, penitence and reconciliation.



Holy Week at St. John's

Holy Week is the most significant and dramatic, week of the entire Church Year.

It contains some of the richest symbolism, the most

stirring rites and customs, and has been provided with some of the finest music that the Church has created. Palm Sunday begins the week, and the sacred Triduum (the three holy days) begins with sunset on Thursday and ends with sunset on Sunday. The Triduum is really a single liturgical event with several parts. The story begins with Maundy Thursday and does not really end until the last mass of Easter. In this drama, we celebrate the new Passover, in which all humanity is redeemed. Here is the schedule for this year.

Palm Sunday

5 April

Eucharist at 8:00 a.m.

Liturgy of the Palms and Eucharist at 11:00 a.m.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week

6, 7, 8 April

Eucharist at 6:15 p.m.

Maundy Thursday

9 April

Solemn Eucharist, Foot Washing, Procession of the Sacrament,, Agapé Supper, and stripping of the altar at 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday

10 April

Good Friday Liturgy at 12:30 p.m.
Tenebrae at 6:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday

11 April

Liturgy of the Word at 10:00 a.m.
The Great Vigil of Easter at 8:00 p.m.

The First Sunday of Easter

12 April

Eucharist at 8:00 a.m.
Procession and Solemn Eucharist at 11:00 a.m.
Followed by Egg Hunt for Children 2-12

Palm Sunday

The Palm Sunday Liturgy has two distinct parts, each with its own tone and feeling. The Liturgy of the Palms is a rite of joy and triumph. We recall the Lord's entry into Jerusalem, when the people greeted him with cries of "Hosanna" and waved branches and scattered them in his path. On this day, we bless branches of palm using incense and baptismal water. The people hold their branches aloft as they are blessed and as we move in procession to the church. As the people carry their branches and we move to the church, a psalm is sung which captures the mood of the moment. "Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter" suggests the mood of festal entrance, and solemn anticipation. "The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone" is a foretaste of the passion and resurrection. "Form a procession with branches" echoes the visible symbols of the palms. The repeated "Hosanna" refrain, which means "Save us, we pray", recalls the solemn festivity of the day.

The second part of the liturgy begins when we get to the church for the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist. The atmosphere changes. At the "crossing", the point where the center aisle comes up to the altar, we pause to pray that God "whose Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain" may lead us to find that the way of the cross leads to life. The mood has changed. The Passion is solemnly sung by the deacons of the passion, singers appointed for this special ministry and vested for the occasion in red dalmatics. We are now fully in the experience of Holy Week, when, in the words of the preface to the eucharistic prayer, we celebrate Christ who was "lifted high

upon the cross to draw the whole world to himself," for he is the source of eternal salvation.



Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week:

6:15 p.m.

The simple eucharists of these days prepare us for the rites of the passion which will follow on Thursday and Friday. As on Palm Sunday, the liturgical color is deep red, signifying the blood of Christ. On each day we read either a passage from John's gospel or an alternative from either Matthew or Mark. Monday's gospel tells of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with precious ointment, an act he interpreted as a preparation for his death. On Tuesday, we read of the cleansing of the temple, a controversial act which no doubt contributed to the arrest and trial of Jesus. On Wednesday, as an immediate preparation for the Passion, we read of the betrayal of Jesus by his friend.

In this parish, we also read certain non-scriptural readings suitable for these days. On Monday, we consider Thomas Traherne's 17th century meditation on the cross with its ringing proclamation that "the cross is the abyss of wonders, the center of desires, the school of virtues the house of wisdom, the throne of love...and the gate of heaven." On Tuesday, Basil the Great, the fourth century bishop, reminds us the connection between our baptism and our death as he says that "when runners reach the turning point on a race course, they have to pause briefly before they can go back in the opposite

direction. So also when we wish to reverse the direction of our lives, there must be a pause or a death to mark the end of one life and the beginning of another.” On Wednesday, Melito of Sardis, a second century Bishop, places Christ in the center of salvation history: “He is the One who brought us out of slavery into freedom, out of darkness into light, out of death into life, out of tyranny into an eternal kingdom.”



Maundy Thursday

The only liturgy on this day (apart from Morning Prayer) is in the evening because it commemorates the evening meal shared with Jesus and his friends. There is a festal tone to the liturgy, since it honors the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist, however it is a restrained festivity. We use white vestments, but they are not festal vestments, they are the simple passion tide white without adornment.

Following the homily, the Maundy occurs. In this rite of foot washing, Jesus shows his disciples one last time his ministry of love, the ministry to which he calls us as well as them. He assumes the role of a slave and washes their feet, shares a simple meal with them, and goes out to pray in loneliness and abandonment. The Maundy gives the name to this holy day. Maundy comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, mandate, which appears in the anthem for the day "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I have loved you (John 13:34, Prayer Book page 275). This anthem, and others from John's gospel accompany the Maundy as the sacred ministers wash the feet of members of the congregation. (Having a good number of persons

willing to have their feet washed is an important part of making this liturgy symbolically effective.) The foot washing, echoing as it does the mandate of Christ to love one another, remains a powerful symbol of the Church's vocation to follow its savior in acts of servant ministry.

Following the Eucharist, the liturgy continues with a procession to the Altar of Repose, where the sacrament is placed until Good Friday. Removing the sacrament underlines the emptiness of the sanctuary which will later be enhanced by the solemn stripping of the altar. The sacrament is reserved at the Altar of Repose because it will be used on Good Friday at the Solemn Good Friday Liturgy for communions. There is a tradition that the eucharist is not celebrated on Good Friday. In this way, the Good Friday liturgy is linked with the Maundy Thursday Liturgy of which it is, in some ways, a continuation.

After the sacrament is taken out in procession, placed at the altar of repose and venerated, the congregation goes to the parish hall for a simple meal which traces its origins to the customs of the fourth century Armenian Church and to medieval English usage. It is a simple meal of soup, bread and some items such as cheese, dried fruits and olives which might have been part of such a community meal in Jesus' time.

The community now forms a procession and, as Psalm 69 is sung, we move back to the church. The psalm looks forward to the crucifixion, with its lines about being given vinegar to drink and gall to eat. Then, as Psalm 22, another passion psalm is sung, the altar is stripped bare and the

remaining ornaments are removed from the sanctuary. Then, the ministers go to the altar and ceremonially wash it with water and wine, symbolizing the blood and water which flowed from the side of Christ at the crucifixion and recalling the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. Then the altar stone is anointed with oil of myrrh, one of the herbs used for preparation of dead bodies for burial. The liturgy now ends abruptly, since in fact, it is not an ending, but a pause, for now we await the celebration of Good Friday.



Good Friday

The Church is bare and the ministers enter in silence, in passion tide red vestments meant to suggest the blood of Christ. Silence begins the Liturgy of the Word, which concludes with the dramatic reading or chanting of the Passion According to John. The Solemn Collects, which follow, are the fullest form of the Church's public intercessory prayer and present our prayers before God for the entire world for which Christ died. There are four segments of these prayers: for the church, the world and those in authority, for the suffering, and for the mission of the Church. In each section, the deacon bids the prayers, a silence follows and the celebrant sings an appropriate collect which sums up the intercessions.

The Veneration of the Cross follows. A simple wooden crucifix is brought into the church in solemn procession and elevated three times with the acclamation “Behold the Wood of the Cross.” The cross is elevated at the same places where the Paschal Candle will be elevated at the Easter Vigil

on the next evening. This reminds us that the passion and the resurrection of Christ are part of the same saving event. The ministers and the congregation now venerate the cross. It is customary for the people to come forward, kneel at the foot of the cross and kiss the feet of the crucified. Any other gesture of veneration is suitable, too, such as touching the feet of the corpus or gazing upon it for a moment.

A third procession follows introducing the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified. The altar party moves to the Altar of Repose, gets the consecrated bread and wine which were placed there after the Maundy Thursday liturgy, returns to the altar, prepares the sacrament, and leads the people in the communion devotions: the confession, absolution and the Lord's Prayer.

Again, the liturgy ends somewhat abruptly. But it really is not over because we are only pausing for a moment before moving forward in this dramatic reenactment of the drama of our salvation.



Tenebrae

Tenebrae, a Latin word which means “darkness,” is a liturgy composed of readings and psalms, with canticles and prayers, all of which is celebrated in a darkened church by the light of candles which are extinguished as the liturgy proceeds.

The origin of Tenebrae is interesting. Originally there were three tenebrae, one for Wednesday, one for Maundy Thursday and one for Good Friday. Each one is a conflation of the monastic offices of matins and lauds—but for the

following day. Thus, Tenebrae of Maundy Thursday is said on Wednesday, Tenebrae of Good Friday is said on Thursday, and Tenebrae of Holy Saturday is said on Friday evening. Each Tenebrae consists of psalms, readings and prayers, the recognizable parts of the daily office, simply conflated for this liturgy which anticipates the daily office of the following day.

The liturgy begins in a slightly darkened church, the principal light coming from a set of seven candles displayed in a large triangular candle holder called a hearse. One candle is extinguished at the end of each lesson and the penultimate one is extinguished following the canticle Benedictus. The liturgy continues with Psalm 51 one of the traditional penitential psalms, which is read with the final candle hidden behind the altar. The service suggests the darkness which, according to the passion gospels, extended over the entire earth at the crucifixion of the Lord. The last candle, hidden for a while, then restored to the altar, reminds us that God did not leave Jesus in the powers of death but raised him to glory in the resurrection. The service of Tenebrae also contains a dramatic audible reference to the death of Christ and his descent into hell.

In this parish, we keep the Tenebrae of Holy Saturday, read on Friday evening as the last liturgy of Good Friday. While this is a somewhat unusual custom, we believe that the liturgy provides a logical connection between the liturgy of the Passion at mid-day and the liturgy of the burial of Jesus on the following day. The Tenebrae service is also scheduled at a time when those who could not attend the mid-day service might be able to keep Good Friday with this later rite.

✠ ✠ ✠
Holy Saturday

A simple, quiet service of the Word of God brings together the themes of death, the burial of the Lord, the Sabbath day of rest, and our baptism. The liturgy begins with the bidding to “kneel in silent prayer,” just as we did during the Solemn Collects of Good Friday. The continuity of elements throughout these days is a reminder of the essential seamless character of these liturgies. After the liturgy, those who have agreed to help decorate the church for the Easter Vigil and prepare for its rites now ready the church for the paschal festival.

✠ ✠ ✠
The Great Vigil of Easter

This is simply the most important liturgy of the entire year. St. Augustine said, in the fourth century, that this rite is so central that all other celebrations of the Eucharist can be said to be the repeatable parts of this rite. This is the passover of the Lord, the paschal feast of the people of God. We gather in the same darkened church which is stripped, silent, and bereft of fire and water from the end of Good Friday. Suddenly light appears in a flash as new fire is kindled by striking flint against steel. From this fire the celebrant lights the paschal candle. “The Light of Christ,” sings the deacon while bringing the paschal Candle into the darkened church. “Thanks be to God,” reply the people. Just as the cross was borne into the church and venerated on Good Friday, so now the deacon carries the paschal candle in procession into the church, lifting it high three times. Then, by candlelight,

the deacon or a cantor sings the great hymn of Easter praise, the Exsultet (which means “Rejoice!”) We hear the history of salvation in readings from the Hebrew Scriptures. Chief among the readings is the story of Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea. Many of the readings touch on the themes of creation, water, and the spirit by which the people of God gain their identity.

If there are new Christians to be baptized, they are baptized now. In any event, we all renew the promises we made at our baptism, or were made for us at that event, and renew our commitment to Christ. The font is filled with water and the water is consecrated with a prayer which recalls the role of water in salvation history. The celebrant plunges the paschal candle into the font to symbolize the death and resurrection of Jesus, and breathes over the water to recall the imagery in the Genesis story of creation. Water is sprinkled to the four corners of the compass to recall the universal mission of the Church. The congregation, having renewed their vows, is now sprinkled with baptismal water. In this way we make an even deeper commitment to the God who creates us, to Jesus who redeems us and to the Spirit who sanctifies us.

As the celebrant sings “Alleluia, Christ is risen!”, the ancient paschal greeting, the first Eucharist of Easter begins. During the liturgy of the word, the Great Paschal Alleluia is sung and repeated. These are the first alleluias in the liturgy since the Feast of the Transfiguration at the end of Epiphany season, when we “buried the Alleluia” for Lent. The altar candles are lighted, the church is fully lighted, and the liturgy moves to its final segment, the celebration of the first mass of

Easter. Light has broken through the darkness and, in a flash of recognition, we know the Risen Lord.

The liturgy ends with the dismissal, concluding the sacred Triduum, the three holy days. For what we have celebrated in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter is a single continual liturgy which proclaims, re-enacts, and displays the mystery of our redemption through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Urgent!

We are desperately in need of help bringing parishioner Jimmy Lou to church on Sunday. It is a blessing and a privilege to help in this valuable ministry. Perhaps, consider it a part of your Lenten service. Please contact Pam Brown, Beth Rake, or Stuart Brier. Instructions/assistance will be cheerfully provided.

A Note from The Rev'd Deacon Sarah Blaise-Diamond

To the St. John's community:

I want to thank you all for your hospitality in hosting my ordination to the diaconate. It was a day that I had dreamed of for many years, and being able to have the ordination at St. John's with all of you made it even more special than I could have ever imagined! The music and the choir were heavenly, and I could not have dreamt of anything more moving and beautiful. The day that our family first walked into St. John's was another day that I will never forget. I had no idea on that hot summer day that I would be serving here as a seminarian. We all instantly

felt at home and welcomed by you all, and that feeling has only grown deeper as we have gotten to know and love you. In all the world there could not have been a more special place for me to have been ordained. Thank you all for your support and kindness while I have been with you...and for your tolerance as I have learned from you over these past months. Thank you also for the beautiful Bible that was presented to me at my ordination. I will cherish it, and as I carry it with me over the years, I will take you all with me!

With heartfelt thanks,

Sarah

People Here and There

by Jeanne Sutton

Lent is half over. We welcome the joy and thanksgiving of Easter and God's gifts to us. We also look forward to the warmth of spring.

Parishioners are still traveling. Nicholas Wolf went with a group from New York University to Peking (Beijing) China to the university there....Jay Campbell went to Atlanta, Georgia one weekend in March to see the Traveling King Tut Exhibit....Douglas Smith visited family and friends in San Antonio and Austin, Texas from March 18 through March 23 and tasted some warm weather....Pat Hart and David Major will spend Easter with their son Graham in Middlebury, Vermont...In April, Nancy Warfield will go to one of her favorite places, Paris, France.

We welcome back from Florida Fred Harrity

and Sammy ChinThe Rev'd Deacon Sarah Blaies-Diamond welcomes her daughter Jenny Wilson to be with her while her husband Tim is serving in Iraq....On September 29, Kyle De Blasio will be received into the Episcopal Church. Welcome!

On March 19th, Father Prator drove Pamela Brown, Ellen Wagner, Andrew Jones, and Father Corney to Holy Cross Monastery for Brother James Dowd's profession of his first vows in the Order of the Holy Cross....A group from St. John's went to hear the concert of Schola Cantorum on Hudson on March 21st in St. Malachy's Church. Andrew Jones Gordon King, Sal Diana, and Mary Ellen Assue sang in the ensemble. St. John 's attendees were Tim Boos, Fred Harrity, Sammy Chin, Jeanne Sutton, Maureen Crowe, Pamela Brown, Pat Thompson, Ellen Wagner, and Richard Lipscomb. We were pleased to visit with the Rev'd Barbara Hutchinson and her husband Bill, who also attended....On the last Saturday in March, Douglas Smith with Jeanne Sutton and Pamela Brown will drive to Pennswood Village in Newtown, Pennsylvania to see Jeanne Morrow and Nancy Warfield.

Happy Birthday:

April 1st John Wulff
April 5th Susan Harrigan
April 29th Tim Boos

In This Issue

<i>Confession</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Deacon Sarah Blaies-Diamond</i>	<i>page 10</i>
<i>Easter Egg Hunt</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Easter Flowers</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Holy Week at St. John's</i>	<i>page 5-10</i>
<i>Rector's Message</i>	<i>page 2</i>
<i>Soup Kitchen at St. Ignatius</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Vestry Report</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>Village Nursing Home - Help Needed</i>	<i>page 10</i>
<i>The Watch</i>	<i>page 4</i>

ST. JOHN'S
IN THE VILLAGE

224 Waverly Place
New York, NY 10014
Visit our Website: www.stjvny.org