

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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Sexagesima

January 31, 2016

KEEPING THE FAST

Since ancient times, Christians have kept a public fast on the forty weekdays of Lent. Because in the late Middle Ages it was often treated as a meritorious work, atoning for sin, many Protestant churches stopped observing it. The Church of England, however, retained it; although its official Homily was explicit that fasting, like any good work, was not the *cause* of grace but its *effect*.

Lent is the Church's spiritual spring training, when in gratitude for the free gift of God's forgiveness received by faith in the gospel, and in preparation for the celebration of Easter, Christians seek to amend their lives, as testimonies to the grace they have received from the crucified and risen Lord. The Church calls its members to do "works worthy of repentance" (Matthew 3:8), chiefly the triad of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving enjoined in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6). The three belong together – for if we are to serve God (in prayer) and our neighbors (in giving alms) we must learn to deny ourselves (fasting). If we are slaves to our appetites and passions (whether

gluttony, lust, envy or pride), we shall not be able to serve God or neighbor in righteousness and charity. Only in the temperance that self-denial brings can we be free persons in full possession of ourselves, and ready to serve him. The fast therefore is both inward and outward. In the words of Gregory the Great's hymn, "Give us the self-control that springs / From discipline in outward things, / that from each stain and spot of sin, / our souls may keep the fast within" (#56).

In the ancient Church, the fast was austere: abstinence from flesh-meat, fish, eggs, cheese (and all dairy products), wine, and oil throughout the forty (week-) days of the fast (Sunday is never a fast day), and often only one light meal at the end of the day, which might consist of bread, salt, water, and boiled vegetables. (The abstinence from oil is the origin of Mardi Gras – greasy Tuesday – when Christians used up all the fat in preparation for the beginning of the fast.) Later, fasting rules were relaxed and reduced to abstinence from flesh meat. In

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STANDING NOTICES

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Penance, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of Burial of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary.

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Please call the Church Office to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in the hospital.

ST. JOHN'S WEB SITE

Parish Paper essays may be read on our web site:
www.stjohnssav.org

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed
10:30 Mrs. Richard C. E. Jennings

USHER CHAIRMAN

Robert A. Vinyard, Esq.
R. Bartley Turner, Esq.

The flowers at the altar this Sunday are given to the glory of God and in memory of Judy Wasden on her birthday by her family.

A brass crucifix was dedicated last Sunday for use in the chapel in loving memory of Edward John Derst, Jr, by Mr and Mrs. Edward John Derst III and family.

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Mrs. John G. Bradshaw, Jr., Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Mrs. Jayne G. Holland, Mrs. Martha R. Sullivan, Mrs. Edward J. Derst III, Mrs. J. Pride Sheahan, Mrs. F. Debele Maner, Mrs. Michael Maloney

ACOLYTES

8:00 a.m. Henry Osborne
10:30 a.m. Turner Stevens
Jackson McClellan
Edwin Shepherd
Phillip Inglesby

COFFEE HOUR CHAIRMAN

Mrs. Mark D. Stevens

9:30 A.M. SUNDAY ADULT EDUCATION

Fr. Dunbar- *Adult Catechism*
3rd floor, Cranmer Hall, Reading Room
For (1) those considering Baptism, Confirmation, or Reception into the Episcopal Church; (2) newcomers wishing to know more about membership at St. John's; (3) members seeking a "refresher" course in the basics. To receive readings send email to gdunbar@stjohnssav.org

Jack C. Wray- *Do You Hear What I Hear?*
3rd floor, Cranmer Hall, far left room

MEN'S WEEKDAY STUDY & DISCUSSION

Tuesday- Breakfast and Discussion with Fr O'Brien at 6:45 a.m. in Parish House
Thursday- *Romans* with Fr. Dunbar at 7:00 a.m. Reading Room, Cranmer Hall
Thursday- Men's Small Group Faith Fellowship
Enjoy lunch with this group each week
Noon Thursdays, 1st floor, Cranmer Hall

WOMEN'S WEEKDAY STUDY & DISCUSSION

Wednesday- C. S. Lewis Women's Fellowship
2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Noon)
Fellowship Hall, Cranmer Hall
Followed by an optional brown bag lunch.
Bring your lunch and enjoy the fellowship.
Thursday- Bernanos' *Mouchette* with Fr. O'Brien
9:15 a.m., Reading Room, Cranmer Hall

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

the reformed Church of England permission was given for two meals a day. As a work of repentance, the fast always entailed abstinence also "from all delicious pleasures and delectations worldly" (as the 16th Homily puts it). As late as the 18th century, this meant that the theatres and opera houses were closed for Lent - one of the reasons Handel wrote his oratorios, which as sacred music could be performed in this season. Still later a distinction was made between fasting (reduction in *quantity*) and abstinence (reduction in *quality*). The 1928 Prayer Book enjoins just two days of fasting (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday) along with other days of abstinence (chiefly the other weekdays of Lent).

So the Church's discipline is not rigorous, and as necessity or charity requires, other alleviations of and dispensations from the fasting rule can be made. (Little children, the elderly, those on special diets, soldiers and persons engaged in heavy labor.) What is my advice to parishioners? Because Lent is a *public* fast, a *corporate* action, a *shared* discipline, it makes sense to have a common standard. Abstinence from flesh meat is historic, and an easily-effected common standard. It is a good time also to cut back on other indulgences (alcohol, sweets, social media, computer games, and television spring to

mind). The old rule holds that Lent is not a time for festivity. (That's why the only weddings permitted in Lent are very quiet ceremonies done in pressing circumstances.)

Whatever we may do, it's critical that there be *real*, not merely trivial, denial of self. If we cannot say "no" to our appetites and passions, we shall end up saying "no" to God. GGD

PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK

Monday - Friday

8:15 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Morning Prayer & Evening Prayer

Tuesday, February 2nd

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST

(CANDLEMAS)

8:15 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

*Morning Prayer & Evening Prayer
with Holy Communion*

In addition, on Wednesday

9:45 a.m. *Litany*

10:00 a.m. *Said Eucharist*

THE ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Saturday, February 6

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

This is the week to drop off donations! Bring your Rummage Sale items to Cranmer Hall (Fellowship Hall) on Sunday, January 31 before noon or Monday-Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Call Nita Ann Klein at 658-1005 for more information.

WOMEN OF SAINT JOHN'S

GENERAL MEETING- FEBRUARY 3

*Home from Exile: The Return of the Green
Treasures after 120 Years*

All men and women of St. John's and their guests are invited to join us in the Green-Meldrim House after the 10:00 a.m. Chapel Service to hear Susan Arden-Joly speak on the Green Treasures and her adventures in Paris! Refreshments will follow.

8:00 A.M. – HOLY COMMUNION

COLLECT, EPISTLE, and GOSPEL Prayer Book, page 120
A continental breakfast is available in Cranmer Hall following this service.

9:30 A.M.-12:00 P.M. (Noon)—**NURSERY** (*Cranmer Hall*)

9:30 A.M.-10:15 A.M. - ALL AGES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (*Cranmer Hall*)**10:30 A.M. – JOYFUL NOISE, JOYFUL HEARTS** (*Cranmer Hall*)

(*Music, Teaching, and Fun for Pre-School through Kindergarten*)

10:30 A.M.: MORNING PRAYER & SERMON

HYMN #567 <i>Lead Us, Heavenly Father</i>	Dulce Carmen
Sentences, Confession, Absolution and Lord's Prayer.....	Prayer Book, pages 3-7
Versicles and Responses.....	7-8
VENITE EXULTEMUS DOMINO (#608)	9
Psalm #44	394
First Lesson: Genesis 6:5-end <i>God warns Noah of a flood and promises to save him in the Ark.</i>	Insert
BENEDICITE.....	Insert
Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 11:32,33; 12:1-9 and St. Luke 8:4.....	Insert and 121
BENEDICTUS (#638)	14
<i>Children may exit following the cross for PSALM PSINGERS (Grades 1-5).</i>	
Apostles' Creed.....	15
Versicles and Responses.....	16
Collect of the Day.....	120
Other Collects and Prayers, the Grace.....	17-20
HYMN #564 <i>How Firm a Foundation</i>	Lyons
Sermon	Father Dunbar

OFFERING

Sentences

Anthem: *Unto the Hills*..... Jane Marshall

Presentation of Alms: *All Things Are Thine* #732, and Hymn #141 (verse 4)

Prayer and Blessing

HYMN #415 *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*..... Aberystwyth

VOLUNTARY: Toccata on *How Firm a Foundation*..... Claude Murpree

*Everyone is invited to attend the Coffee Hour in the Parish House immediately after the 10:30 a.m. service.
 If you are a guest and visiting our Parish, please make yourself known.*

12:00 P.M. (NOON) – HOLY COMMUNION (Chapel) as at 8:00 a.m.