

MAGGIE'S CROSS

January 2020



A Letter From The Rector

BY FATHER TODD R. DILL+

Remembering through the Saints

It has long been the practice of the Church to remember those saints who have gone before us; those whose lives serve as a testament to the power of living a life following Jesus Christ. Given that every Sunday is dedicated as a feast day of our Lord, we seldom get to honor individual saints or hear of their stories during our weekend liturgies. The two most notable exceptions to this that occur regularly every year are All Saints' Sunday and the Sunday of our patron Saint Margaret. It is the expectation of the Church that the saints be honored on the other six days of the week, through our remembrance of them, through our prayers, and through special liturgies that mark their Christian witness.

In 2020, Saint Margaret's will begin to hold simple liturgies to mark some of the major feast days of our church.

If you have never looked at the plethora of feast day celebrations in the Episcopal Church, I would refer you to pages 15 through 33 of the Book of Common Prayer, where the rubrics for our calendar and the listing of feast days is contained. If you haven't glanced at this before, this might be a wonderful opportunity for you to learn about the ancient practices of the Church to honor its saints and commemorate their lives through devotion and liturgy.

The practice of honoring the saints harkens back to the early Church, where it marked the martyrdom of the Christian faithful as they bore witness to their faith in Jesus by sacrificing their lives in service to him. All twelve apostles are believed to have died as martyrs of the faith, and countless early followers of Jesus sacrificed themselves rather than renounce their faith in Jesus. Additionally, those who were not martyred but exhibited exemplary Christian witness were honored as saints within the tradition, and for some that honoring took the form of a feast day dedicated to them.

Over the next few months you, you will have new opportunities to join the clergy of the church in remembering these saints on their feast days. While Sundays are always our primary day of worship, and all are expected to honor the Lord on the Sabbath, these additional liturgies will allow us to experience more deeply the fuller expression of our faith. These liturgies will take

place during the week, will be held at 7pm, and will be simple, quiet liturgies, much like our current Saturday Masses. I would encourage you to set aside some time to join us on these dates as we remember those who in the time of trial stood firm in their witness of the faith.

- Monday, February 24th; *The Feast Day of Saint Matthias the Apostle*
- Wednesday, March 25th, *The Annunciation*
- Friday, May 1st, *Saint Philip and Saint James the Apostles*
- Thursday, June 11th, *Saint Barnabas the Apostle*
- Monday, June 29th, *The Solemnity of Saint Peter and Saint Paul*

Almighty God, by your Holy Spirit you have made us one with your saints in heaven and on earth: Grant that in our earthly pilgrimage we may always be supported by this fellowship of love and prayer, and know ourselves to be surrounded by their witness to your power and mercy.

We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom all our intercessions are acceptable through the Spirit, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Fr. Todd+

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In 2020, I resolve to be....



BY FATHER LITO SANTOS+

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This time of the year appropriately focuses our mind to setting goals and making plans and resolutions. I hope you have given it time and thought. For this year, I decided to look at the simple and personally achievable ones. So here it goes:

In the year 2020 I resolve to be more thankful, careful and prayerful.

Three simple and achievable resolutions that could elevate my relationships with God and with everyone I encounter in 2020.

The possibilities are abundant and expansive. I confess that these three have been with me all my life but I never paid close attention at all. To give thanks in every turn from the moment I open my eyes to the closing of my day. To thank the Lord for giving me another day to love, to serve, to be alive. I thank the Lord for every fiber of my being and every breath I take. And I thank the Lord for all the persons I love and who love me; for all those I know and do not know; for all those I meet and would meet on any given day. I thank you Lord for everything I see and feel; for all that I sense and smell; for all that make me know I am alive – for all and everything in this world – I thank you Lord. To live with care for all creation and creatures both big and small. To appreciate God's caring love in giving us the living earth and all that is in it. I should be conscious of God's providing presence and help to preserve, respect and promote the balance and life sustaining goodness in my surroundings. I should be gentle and conscious when moving and using the resources around me. When I look around me, I am filled with awe and so, I thank the Lord. To soak in your presence and feel your all-embracing love is life itself. I lift my heart and soul heavenward and simply say – thank you Lord. Be with me, guide me, bless me and preserve me as I navigate through 2020.

Have a fully blessed year y'all.

- Fr. Lito+

Questions of Faith



BY FATHER ERIC GRUBB

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Questions of Faith—

How Can God Hear

Everyone's Prayer?

This question immediately reminded me of the 2003 movie *Bruce Almighty*. The basic plot is that Bruce, played by Jim Carry, is fed up with work after being looked over for a big promotion. Bruce is so angry that he accuses God of not treating him fairly.

God, played by Morgan Freeman, hears the complaint of Bruce and offers him the chance to be God to see if he could do a better job. Bruce quickly becomes

overwhelmed by the constant sound of thousands of whispering voices in his head.

What he is hearing are the many prayers being offered in real-time. In what is one of

the most comical scenes in the whole movie Bruce tries using his godly powers to organize all of the incoming prayers, including turning them all into sticky notes that end up covering every square inch of his house. Finally, he turns all the requests into an e-mail system that just when he finishes answering millions of prayers, millions more come in.

When we think of God hearing our prayers, we may end up thinking of God kind of like Bruce, as someone who has to focus his attention on every petition coming his way. Perhaps we may even believe that God has to delete some of the less critical requests so that he has time for the more "important" ones. The problem is, or rather the good news is that God is not limited in the same ways that we are as human beings. Where we are finite, limited, and can only give our attention to one maybe two things at a time. God, however, is eternal, unlimited, and as St. Paul is quoted in the Book of Acts, "In God, we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). God, unlike Bruce, is the One who is the very ground of our being and existence. That means that God is close to every one of us and that by virtue of our existence, we can know that God has his attention on us. God is able to hear everyone's prayers because he is intimately close to each and every one of us.

- Father Eric+

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Youth Spotlight

BY ELIZABETH PFEIFER
*ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR YOUTH MINISTRY*

Recipe for EYC success

One of my favorite activities to do with our youth group is to bake. We've made thousands of chocolate chip cookies, made bread dough for them to bake at home, baked brownies, and this past fall we even celebrated Saint Francis of Assisi by baking homemade dog and cat treats.

Baking with youth group obviously has its pitfalls: it takes a lot more prep on my end before the meeting, it's a bit chaotic to get everything together and baked in our 90 minute meeting, and generally there is more to clean up.

However, when students bake together they must actively work together. They must slow down, thoroughly read the recipe, and take turns putting ingredients in. We've had a few groups move too fast and wind up with cookies with too much flour and not enough sugar, or the dreaded 2 tablespoons instead of 2 teaspoons salt. They learn quickly and the next time we bake, those students who were too quick last time are the ones saying, "hold on, hold on, we have to read the recipe!"

Baking, more often than not, looks like organized chaos: flour somehow gets everywhere, there are eggshells on the counter, and a bunch of dishes piled up next to the sink.

But, baking is also hands on, fun, and you usually wind up with a tasty treat to enjoy when all is said and done. Those are all qualities I aim to have in every youth group meeting: a tangible, hands on activity to engage us with our faith, a fun time with friends, and a tasty treat at dinner. Our group can be loud and, often, looks like organized chaos but, while we may be in the middle of making a mess, we are asking to students to slow down, thoroughly read the recipe (in our case, scripture) and take turns sharing their thoughts and insights about their faith.



*This semester,
come bake
with us!*

EYC will meet every Sunday in January beginning on the 5th (12th, 19th, and 26th) from 5-6:30 with dinner 6:30-7.

All 6th-12th graders are invited to EYC gatherings and friends are always welcome.



Sunday School



BY CATHERINE CHINTALA
ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR
FOR CHILDRENS MINISTRY

Thanks, praise and 2020 plans

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual St. Nicholas Festival on December 7th...we had a fun-filled morning of delicious pancakes, story time in the nave, fun crafts, and live music. Special thanks go to Father Eric, Joanie & Eric Cameron, the Sells Family, The Feldser Family, Jim Thornton, Alison Caterina, Barbara Koulsar, Christine Wilkins, Phil & Griffin Hejl, Patrick & Carter Williams, Chris Cox, Ian Culp, and Jennifer Pohorence.

During the fall semester our Sunday School classes focused on the Old Testament; in the new year we will shift to the New Testament for the rest of our school year. We will celebrate Epiphany on January 5th, and learn all about this holiday and what it means to each of us.

Our Sunday School classes will explore themes such as:

- Jesus the Storyteller
- Jesus the Miracle Worker,
- Jesus the Healer
- and... Jesus the Anointed One.



Parents are invited to join class on February 2nd as a Mystery Reader: a sign-up genius will be sent out to all Sunday School families.

Mark your calendars for our next Family Teach Day on January 26th. We will meet some new four-legged friends and learn about the wonderful ways that Canine Companions for Independence helps our community. We will also collect items that will be donated to CCI dog trainers.

Looking ahead to the spring, Holy Communion Classes will be held on 4/26, 5/3, 5/10, with a Holy Communion Celebration on 5/17. Details and registration will be sent out this month.

And mark your summer calendar....get ready for **VBS! Rocky Railway will be pulling into the St. Margaret's Station on June 22-26th.** It will be a fun-filled week of learning and fellowship! We'll need many volunteers to make this year a success! Be on the lookout for emails and information on how to get involved.

Please stop by our bulletin board outside of the church office. There you will find information about Children's Ministry programs as well a sweet walk down memory lane with pictures of past Epiphany Pageants. Come and see how our church family has grown!

Catherine has office hours on
Tuesdays & Fridays.
You can reach her at:
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January Calendar

1/4-5	2020 Vestry Election
1/5	Epiphany Pageant during the 9:00 service
1/8	Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm
1/9	First Aid Training, 6:30-9:30 pm
1/11	DOK monthly meeting & installation of new officers
1/12	Annual Parish Meeting, 10:15-11:00 am in the Parish Hall
1/12	Ordination Celebration for Eric Grubb following the 11:15 service
1/18	Canine Companions for Independence workshop
1/18	Knots of Love monthly meeting, 10:30 am
1/20	Church office closed for MLK Day
1/25	Men's Monthly Fellowship Breakfast, 8:00 am in the Parish Hall
1/25	First Aid Training, from 1:00-4:00 pm



Around campus

Have you noticed the changes to our campus?

We now have all new fiberglass exterior doors, with new closers and locks. We have also installed a new access management system, along with surveillance cameras. This all aids in keeping our preschool and parish safer, during the week, and on Sundays.

St. Margaret's is also now the proud owner of a new water fountain and water bottle filling station in the school hallway. Installation was made possible through funds received through a "Green Grant" awarded to StM through the North Carolina Episcopal Church Foundation. Special thanks to Father Eric for his initiative in applying for the funding.



Next up in 2020

we are addressing:

- wood-framed gothic windows
- artificial stucco exterior
- the condition of our stonework
- and the roof

2020 Vestry

Amy Gorman, *Junior Warden*

Chris Cox

Julie Jenkins

Terry Anderson

Mike Murphy

Densel White

Jessica Parker

Chad Hinton

Brian Scott

Warren McDonald, *Treasurer*