

# **THE CHRONICLE**

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*Grace and Saint Peter's Church*  
*Baltimore's Traditional Anglo-Catholic Parish*

**August 2009**

## From the Rector

Dear Friends in Christ,

August is upon us and with it comes preparation for the fall. During August we shall keep the Feast of the Assumption on the Sunday after the Assumption as well as on the day. The Assumption is a beautiful feast of Our Lady. The prayer book collect says "O God, who hast taken to thyself the blessed Virgin Mary, mother of thy Incarnate Son." It teaches us that we are called to share with the Blessed Mother in God's redemption of the world.

I want to thank Martin Burch for all his work this summer as organist and for Mark Blackwell and Megan Amoss as our cantors. We are so lucky to have good music all year at Grace and St. Peter's. It is especially good to be able to sing Merbecke unaccompanied, as it was written.

Please remember to give nominations for the Vestry to the members of the nominating committee. They are Faye Lee, Louise Tapper, and Charles Peace and Nona Porter. Please speak to them about any nominations to the Vestry for the October Parish meeting.

Please remember that we are here all summer and that Parish life continues as usual. Please remember to pay your pledge. Pat Hom, our treasurer, and the members of the Vestry thank you for doing so.

Bishop Rabb will be with us on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. Please plan to join his for High Mass and a reception as he makes his visitation.

Faithfully yours,

*The Rev'd Frederick S. Thomas, SSC*  
*Rector*

## From Father Speer

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS illuminate the Gospel. We can read them only when standing inside the church and when God chooses to illuminate them by means of sunshine from outside the building. Stand in the middle of the nave of Grace and Saint Peter's, look westward and you will see, below the monumental Ascension window, a series of four rectangular glass panels. We will read them from left to right in four numbers of the Chronicle.

I needed binoculars to read the detail in these four panels. The artist and the glazier knew they would be difficult to read. God the Holy Ghost does not hand the Gospel to us on a silver platter. Rather, he sends the Gospel to us at a time of his choosing and under circumstances of his choosing. I can read these stories only during the day time and when divine worship is not in progress.

Saint Luke tells the story of the first panel on the left of his Gospel at 2:47. Open your New Testament and find this verse. Read the story from the top of the panel, rotating clockwise. Dominating the top of the panel and framing the picture from the top for the entire width of the picture we see the curtain of the Temple. Dark purple in color, it is closed. This curtain is open only once annually when the high priest alone enters the holy of holies in order to pray for God's people on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. When the high priest enters the holy of holies, he walks between the two parts of the curtain, through an opening made from the bottom to the top.

In contrast, when Christ Jesus our Lord enters the holy of holies for once and for all by means of his death on the Cross for our salvation, the curtain of the Temple is torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). Clearly, a human being opening the curtain from the bottom to the top is not sufficient. This must be done over and over again. Only sufficient is the moment when the Father tears in two the curtain for once and for all from the top to the bottom.

The upper right hand quarter of the panel presents two doctors of the law, standing. Their eyes focus to their right, on the figure standing to their right. Their hand gestures demonstrate engagement with the person standing to their right. The lower right hand quarter of the panel presents one doctor of the law, seated. His hand is on his chin; he listens and thinks. He looks carefully at the speaker standing to his right. His dominant feature is his robe, deep red in color. We encounter this patch of deep red in each of the four panels as we notice their narrative arc. In the lower right hand corner we see a

golden throne upon which a doctor of the law is seated, marking his authority. In the ancient world on the person in a supreme office is allowed to sit. This sitting attitude demonstrates his power. The lower left hand corner of the panel presents a golden urn containing the scrolls from the holy Scriptures. These scrolls are the Word of God given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The golden throne and the golden urn balance and stabilize the piece from the two lower corners.

Finally, in the upper left hand corner of the panel we see the barefoot figure of Jesus. He is a youth, beardless. He stands, an attitude of the learner and the student. He already wears the halo orb about his head radiating his divine energy. In his hands he holds a scroll of the Bible, unrolled, the focus of the three doctors of the law. The eyes of the three doctors of the law all focus on Jesus the youth. This picture of Jesus in the Temple speaking with the doctors of the law, both hearing them and asking them questions, present our only glimpse of Jesus during the largely hidden years between his birth as a human being and the beginning of his public ministry. The diptych of windows in the first room of the sacristy presents a development of these themes.

*Father Speer*  
*Priest Associate*

## **The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

The Transfiguration has been said to be the culmination of our Lord's public life, as His Baptism was its beginning, and the Ascension its conclusion. Detailed accounts of the Transfiguration are given in all of the Gospels except St John's, where we would not expect to find it, as history tells us that his Gospel was written to supplement the others, and therefore it contains but little repetition. He refers to it, however, in his first chapter – "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father." St Peter also, in his second Epistle, describes it. He, with St James and St John, were given the privilege of being present on this occasion when the glory of God, hidden beneath the veil of His Flesh, for a moment broke forth before their awed vision. This divine manifestation was timed so as to fall immediately before the announcement of His coming Passion, thus to fortify the disciples against the shock that was inevitable upon the thought of His suffering such humiliation and death.

The Gospels do not name the mountain upon which the Transfiguration took place, but historians tell us that in the early centuries, especially in Palestine, where the local

tradition would naturally be more trustworthy, there is no suggestion that it occurred anywhere else than on Mount Tabor. This has been very generally accepted. Origen, St Cyril of Jerusalem, St John of Damascus, St Jerome, and a host of others of the Fathers testify to Tabor as the scene of the mystery. In fact, there was no dissentient voice until certain modern schools of criticism adopted as a basis of their work the principle that history did not begin until they arrived on the scene, and that therefore everything that came before them was suspect, and must be swept away.

The festival is oriental in its origin, and goes back perhaps to the fourth century, being first known among the Armenians, [among whom] it is still one of the five great feasts of the year, and is kept for three days. The Greeks keep it with a vigil and an octave. The Western Church was slow to adopt it, it not being heard of in the West until about 850.

From *Athletes of God* by the Rev'd S. C. Hughson, O.H.C.

*Father Hughson was a priest, writer, and member of the Order of the Holy Cross, a Monastic Order in the Episcopal Church based in West Park, New York.*



## The Assumption of Blessed Mary

*“There appear a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” Revelation 12:1*

August 15 is the Festival of the Falling Asleep of the Blessed Mother. It is our human way to have many names for, as we have many minds about, facts, so that it is variously called the Assumption or the Falling Asleep or the Repose of the Blessed Virgin. It certainly is a strange thing that no relic of the Blessed Mother has ever been produced. Tradition tells us that her grave was found empty and fragrant with lilies...

This, however, we can say with bed-rock certainty. Besides her own inherent dignity as the Mother of our Lord, Mary stands for the Church of faithful people. She is the representative of faithful souls. She shines before us as the one who brought her will to a perfect loyalty to the will of God through the union of her will with the will of her Divine Son. We are taught to believe that everything that has been accomplished in the Head of the Church shall also be accomplished in His members. He will come again, and we are told His saints will come again. He has overcome and is seated upon His Father's throne, and also “to him that overcometh” is it granted to sit upon a throne (Revelation 3:21). It is this ultimate triumph of the elect soul that we celebrate as we keep the Festival of the Assumption. Through the grace of God we can really win a real victory. Mary suffered with him; we should be very faithless if we doubted that she is glorified with Him, and praying for us that we also may know the final fruits of faithfulness.

From *Meditations for Every Day*, by the Rev'd Father Andrew, S.D.C.

*Father Andrew was a popular spiritual writer and member of the Society of the Divine Compassion, a Monastic Order in the Church of England.*



## August Mass Intentions

*August is the Month of the Assumption*

1 St Peter's Chains	Pope Benedict
2 PENTECOST IX	Our Parish Family
3 Finding of St Stephen	St. Stephen's Church, Erwin, NC
4 St Dominic, C	Religious orders
5 Our Lady of Snows	Greater devotion to Our Lady
6 TRANFIGURATION OLJC	Church of the Transfiguration, New York
7 St Cajetan, C	Eugene our Bishop
8 Vigil of St Lawrence	John Our Bishop
9 PENTECOST X	Our Parish Family
10 ST LAWRENCE, M	Grace and St. Peter's School
11 Monthly Requiem	The faithful departed
12 St Clare, V	The Josph Richey House
13 Feria	Christian orthodoxy
14 Vigil	The All Saints Sisters of the Poor
15 ASSUMPTION BVM	Devotion to the Mother of God
16 SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION (PENTECOST XI)	Our Parish Family
17 Octave	The sick and suffering
18 St Helena, QW (Octave)	Christian families
19 St John Eudes, C (Octave)	Christian teachers
20 St Bernard, Ab. D (Octave)	Monastic orders
21 St Jane Frances de Chantal, W (Octave)	Christian life
22 IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY	Thanksgiving for the Holy Rosary
23 PENTECOST XII	Our Parish Family
24 ST BARTHOLOMEW, AP M	Apostolic Faith
25 St Louis, KC	The Church in France
26 St Zephyrinus, PM	Apostolic zeal
27 St Joseph Calasanza, C	The gift of repentance
28 St Augustine, BCD	Christian scholarship
29 Beheading of St John Baptist	Discipleship
30 PENTECOST XIII	Our Parish Family
31 St Aidan	The Church of England

## **Daily Mass Schedule**

### **Sunday**

7:45 a.m. Matins & Low Mass

10:00 a.m. High Mass

### **Monday**

6:00 p.m. Low Mass

### **Tuesday**

12:00 Noon Low Mass and Holy Unction

### **Wednesday**

6:00 p.m. Low Mass

### **Thursday**

6:00 p.m. Low Mass

### **Friday**

8:45 a.m. Sung Mass

6:00 p.m. Low Mass

### **Saturday**

12:00 Noon Low Mass

### **Grace and Saint Peter's Church**

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