

THE CHRONICLE

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

February 2009

From the Rector

Dear Friends in Christ:

February begins with Candlemas. That is the Presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple, commonly called the Purification of St. Mary the Virgin. We celebrate Christ as the Light of the world and carry blessed candles in procession round the church. We are observing the Festival on the Eve of the Feast, that is Sunday the first of February. We shall also observe Chinese New Year the same day with the Dragon Dance and Chinese food at the coffee hour.

On the actual Feast Day, February 2nd, I shall be preaching at Saint Clement's Church in Philadelphia. I am looking forward to visiting my old friend Fr. Gordon Reid and his people for this beautiful Solemnity.

I recently returned from the Society of the Holy Cross retreat at the Manresa Jesuit Retreat Center in Staten Island, New York. I found the time away on retreat spiritually refreshing. There was snow on the ground but not falling so the retreat center looked like a winter wonderland.

I am preparing three children for First Communion and/or Baptism after Mass each Sunday. Kendal, Daniel and Max are studying for this important event.

Canon Mark Gatza, the canon for Congregational Development, will be with the Vestry at our February meeting. We are going to discuss Church growth and plan for a parish meeting to talk about ways that we can make ourselves better known in our community.

The parish directory that Robert Zimmerman has been working on so diligently is almost ready. He sent you a stamped addressed envelope. We assume that if you did not return the envelope that you are satisfied with the information he has about you for the directory, as he noted in his letter.

The next three Sundays are the "Gesima" Sundays, Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima. Although we follow the Novus Ordo lectionary and they are Sundays after the Epiphany or Ordinary time, we remember that they are a reminder that Lent is approaching. These Sundays are secondarily called in the Prayer book of 1662 the third, second, and first Sundays before Lent.

Shrove Tuesday is a good time to be shaven. Please speak to one of the clergy for an appointment for confession if the public times are not convenient for you. There will be a pancake breakfast in the school auditorium on the morning of Shrove Tuesday from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. The fee is nominal.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 25th, Mass is celebrated at 8.45, 12:00 Noon and 6:00 pm. Stations and Benediction will be after the 6:00 pm Mass each Friday of Lent save Good Friday. This will be followed by a simple supper in the Rectory dining room. Please speak the Suzanne Meier if you can do a Lenten meal on a Friday. I hope that you have a blessed Candlemas and a wonderfully graceful Lent.

I remain faithfully your Priest,

Frederick S. Thomas, SSC
Rector



The Saints of Candlemas

This is one of those days which might be called the festivals of Divine Obedience. On this day our Saviour submitted to the law which required every firstborn boy to be presented to the Lord. Surely He who was Himself the Lord God from heaven needed no such presentation, even as He, being Very God of Very God, did not need to be brought into covenant with God through circumcision. But as He said, "I come to do the will of Him who sent me," His will was always conformed to that of the Father.

On this day He had with Him those of His Saints, who like Him had, in a matchless degree, conformed themselves to the Father's will. First of all, the Blessed Virgin who did not need to go through any purification; for the Conception by the sinless Mother of the Child who was God, through the miraculous work of God the Holy Ghost, could bring no defilement as the law regarded it. But she to who God had given the highest imaginable privilege, would claim no special privilege for herself...

The holy man who presided at the Presentation in the Temple was one in spirit with the divine Son and His Holy Mother. Simeon, "waiting for the consolation of Israel," had received as the reward of his faithfulness the assurance that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. St. Luke tells us that on the day upon which the Child was

brought to be presented, “he came by the Spirit into the temple.” That is to say, he felt an interior urge from the Holy Spirit to go up to the temple at this particular time to pray. It was no imperative command, but only a suggestion; but he went just as swiftly to do what he recognised was a counsel of the Spirit as if it had been a peremptory command. He did not wait for the spur of obligation. It was the strength and joy of his life instantly to conform himself to every such intimation of the Spirit’s mind. Suppose he had waited a few hours, suiting his response to some temporary convenience of his own. The Lord would have come and gone, and he would not have seen Him; for the divine promises are given always on the condition that we do our part, by which obedient course we liberate, as it were, the divine omnipotence to work infinite blessings for us and in us.

Another of the Candlemas Saints was Holy Anna, who might be described as the first cloistered religious of the Gospel, who “departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” Her heart was wholly given to God, and to her was accorded the high privilege of being the first woman, next to the Blessed Mother, to carry the message of what God had done for His people; for she did not fail “to speak of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” As the Visitation of the Blessed Mother to St. Elizabeth gave us the Canticle, *Magnificat*, sung by the Virgin, so this day gives us the *Nunc Dimittis*, in which Blessed Simeon commended his soul into the hands of God, glad now to depart since his eyes had seen the divine Salvation.

From *Athletes of God* by The Rev’d Shirley C. Hughson, O.H.C.

Father Hughson was a prolific writer, priest, and member of the Order of the Holy Cross, an Anglican Religious Order.

February Music

February 1 – Candlemas (observed)

Communion Service in D Major - Everett Titcomb
Nunc Dimittis - S. S. Wesley
Ave Regina Caelorum - Francesco Soriano

February 8 – Septuagesima – Epiphany V

Missa Brevis - Antonio Lotti
Adoramus Te - Orlando di Lasso

February 15 – Sexagesima – Epiphany VI

Messe Breve No. 7 - Charles Gounod
O Salutaris Hostia - Charles Gounod

February 22 – Quinquagesima – Epiphany VII

Messe Basse - Gabriel Faure
Laudate Dominum - Henri Mulet

Wednesday, February 25 (6:00 PM)

ASH WEDNESDAY

Missa a 4 voci - Giovanni Grossi
Call To Remembrance - Richard Farrant
Hide Not Thy Face From Us - Richard Farrant

From Father Speer

Dear Friends,

Water is a mystery. Water freezes and becomes solid ice. Water becomes liquid and flows downward. It takes the shape of its containing vessel. Water evaporates and rises. An animal dies when immersed in water. Water is necessary for cleansing. Water is necessary for the sustenance of life. Water is a mystery.

The Church presents water to us as the outward and visible sign for our Baptism. When you enter Grace and Saint Peter's, touch the holy water in the stoup just inside the door, make the sign of the cross, and renew your baptismal vows. Pause and glance through the handsome screen enclosing the Baptistery. Notice the angel faithfully holding up the font in which we are baptized. Recall your own Baptism and the faithful priest and congregation who witnessed it. By virtue of Baptism, you are a new person in Christ Jesus.

Take your place in the nave of the church. Wait in anticipation at the beginning of High Mass for the Asperges, the sprinkling of holy water reminding us of our Baptism. "Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be clean. Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." In Baptism we die the death of Jesus, live his new life, and drink of him, the living water.

Holy Water is set aside and blessed for the purpose of reminding us of the Baptism of Jesus. The Holy Father explains it this way: "At the moment when Jesus comes up out of the river, the heavens part, and from them is heard the voice in which the Father acknowledges him as his Son. The opening of heaven is a sign that this descent into our night is the dawning of a new day, that the barrier between God and man is being broken down by this identification of the Son with us. God is no longer inaccessible. In the depths of our sins, and even of death, he searches for us and brings us into the light again. To this extent the baptism of Jesus anticipates the entire drama of his life and death and at the same time explains them to us.

Holy water is a mystery, the mystery and instrument of our death and life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Father Speer
Priest Associate

February Mass Intentions

February is the Month of the Holy Childhood

1 PURIFICATION BVM – CANDLEMAS	Our Parish Family
2 Purification BVM – Candlemas	Community of St. Mary
3 St Blasius, BM	The sick
4 St Andrew Corsini, BC	Growth in holiness
5 St Agatha, VM	All Saints Sisters of the Poor
6 St Titus, BC (St Dorothy, VM)	The Joseph Richey House
7 Of Our Lady	Marian Devotion
8 EPIPHANY V – SEPTUAGESIMA	Our Parish Family
9 St Cyril of Alexandria, BCD	Eugene, our Bishop
10 St Scholastica, V	Pope Benedict
11 Our Lady of Lourdes	John, our Bishop
12 Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order	Religious orders
13 Feria	Rowan, Archbishop of Canterbury
14 Of Our Lady (St Valentine, M)	God's love for us
15 EPIPHANY VI – SEXAGESIMA	Our Parish Family
16 Feria	The Church in Maryland
17 Monthly Requiem	The faithful departed
18 St Mary Bernard, V	Devotion to the Mother of God
19 Feria	Grace & St. Peter's School
20 Feria	Preparation for a holy lent
21 Of Our Lady	Personal holiness
22 EPIPHANY VII – QUINQUAGESIMA	Our Parish Family
23 St Peter Damian, BCD (Vigil)	Minsitry to the sick
24 ST MATTHIAS, AP	The Faith of the Apostles
25 ASH WEDNESDAY	A Holy Lent
26 Feria	Amendment of life
27 St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows	Thanksgiving for the Incarnation
28 Feria	Keeping a good Lent

Daily Mass Schedule

Sunday

7:45 a.m. Matins & Low Mass

10:00 a.m. High Mass

5:00 p.m. Evensong

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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