

THE CHRONICLE

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

January 2010

From the Rector

Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

A.C. Prudentius, 5th Century

Dear Friends in Christ,

Christians are an historical people. They believe in a God who loves them so much that in the fullness of time He sends His Son to redeem them from sin and death. This event is called the Incarnation. The Son of the living God comes to us "when half-spent was the night." The old German carol printed above reminds us that Jesus is a person. He is not a philosophy or a list of rules but the Son of God. He is born of Mary, called the Mystic Rose in medieval times, and God the Father. His birth brings about a change in mankind's relationship with God. "The Son of God became Son of Man that the sons of men might become the sons of God" (St. Leo the Great).

Oftentimes, in the season of Advent we are so busy buying gifts that we forget that we are freely given the greatest gift of all. For Christians this is the true Christmas gift, the Christ child given to us long ago. The world of the First Century was not prepared for such a gift, but God in His infinite wisdom chose to fulfill the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." God fulfilled the words of Jeremiah in His only Son.

I believe that one must approach Christmas with the awe and wonder of a small child. I remember growing up in rural North Carolina, and the excitement of Christmas was overwhelming. I think of Midnight Mass at St. Stephen's Church and presents under a big tree. I think of relatives and the Christmas pageant. I think of ham and turkey served with big glasses of iced tea on Christmas Day. Time has aged my perceptions, but I am still excited by Christmas. I love the red and white poinsettias and the smell of Christmas greens. But I think that what excites me so much now is that I know God really does love me. He loves me so much that He sent His Son to redeem even my imperfections. Each of us is called to be a child of God and an heir of eternal life. Perhaps the secret of a holy Christmas is a child-like attitude. Viewing the events of the Christmas celebrations should cause us to find in them the presence of Christ. St. Leo the Great calls Christmas the "sacrament of the day of the Lord's birth." For St. Leo, Christ takes an active part in the celebration of Christmas. Thus the celebration is not simply a past event which we recall but a present reality upon which we gaze.

When we gaze on the figure of the Christ Child in the creche at Christmas, we should think about the reality of Christ in our lives. When we prepare ourselves for our Christmas Holy Communion, we should remember that we are preparing to receive the gift of the ages. The Son comes to us in the Eucharist. Humanity is called to God's own reality by the cradle, the God and Man, King and Servant.

Preparation for the reception of the Sacrament should include the use of the Sacrament of Penance. The examination of one's conscience and the confessing of one's sins are an opportunity to open oneself to God's love in our lives. Confessions are heard Sunday at 9:30 a.m. by Father Speer in the Resurrection Chapel Confessional. On Christmas Eve Father Speer will hear Confessions from 5:00-6:00 p.m. Confessions may also be made by appointment.

The Traditional Mass of the Vigil is at 12:00 Noon in the Lady Chapel. The Family Mass of the Vigil at 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve is the second of our liturgical celebrations of the Feast. The Mass of Midnight begins with a Solemn Procession to the Crèche at 11:00 p.m. followed by High Mass with the music of Mozart in D Major. Our choir will be accompanied by strings. At 7:45 a.m. on Christmas Day, Matins will be said, followed by the Mass of the Dawn. At 10:00 a.m. the Mass of the Day will be said.

Please remember that Mass is celebrated daily here at Grace and St. Peter's. One can keep the days of Christmastide at Mass. The Epiphany concludes Christmas just as Ascension Day concludes Easter. We will celebrate it solemnly on January 3rd at the Sunday Mass. Epiphany is on the sixth of January and will be celebrated with Mass at 8:45 a.m. (Sung), and 12:00 Noon. We are invited to join the people and clergy of Mount Calvary Church on Eutaw Street for the Epiphany High Mass at 6:30 p.m. Many of them joined us for the Immaculate Conception on 8th December. There is parking available beside the church, off Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Society of King Charles the Martyr will be here for their annual High Mass and luncheon on the 30th of January. I hope that all of you will come. Please make reservations for luncheon with John Heizer in our parish office. The Rev'd Canon Gordon Reid of St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia, will preach. Bishop Rabb will be with us as well as the clergy of Mount Calvary. Please plan to attend. Again, please make reservations for the luncheon.

I would like to wish each of you a truly joyous Christmas with all heartfelt love and affection.

I remain faithfully your priest,

The Rev'd Frederick S. Thomas, SSC
Rector

From Father Speer

The four stained glass windows on the Gospel side of Grace and Saint Peter's Church tell the story of the three New Testament canticles the church sings daily at Matins and Evensong. These canticles are found in Luke's Gospel, chapters one and two. Read these windows beginning at the back of the church. The first window is modest, one panel, and easy to pass by. In the beginning Luke announces the Gospel in the temple. In the days of King Herod there was a priest named Zechariah whose wife was named Elizabeth. They were righteous before God but had no children. It came Zechariah's turn to burn incense in the temple of the Lord.

See on the bottom left the thurible or censer that Zechariah has prepared for the purpose of burning incense and sending up the prayers of the people in the form of sweet-smelling smoke rising up to God. It is said that every one of the excellent thurifers at Grace and Saint Peter's, on his way into the church and before he assumes his duties, pauses for a moment before this window, looks up at Zechariah and his thurible, and rededicates himself to the sacred office of thurifer. Also rising up to God from the brazier on the floor of the temple is the flame Zechariah uses to light the sacred fire in his thurible. His beard gray with age, Zechariah kneels in preparation for his duties, holding in his hands the three chains of the thurible. He wears a complete head covering for protection against the intense glory of the Lord in the temple. He raises his eyes to look upon the face of the Lord.

Zechariah looks up to see the menorah holding the sacred candles, whose fires reach up toward heaven. And the surprise. Zechariah sees descending to him the angel Gabriel holding a staff. He is troubled and afraid. He asks, "How have I sinned to offend the Lord in his holy place?" But the angel raises his right hand in blessing to Zechariah. Read the words of the angel at Luke 1:13-17. Walk into the church during the hours of daylight and read the words of the angel to Zechariah along the bottom of the window. Read the memorial dedication at the bottom of the window, including the years 1856 and 1857. Is there a connection between the longing for children expressed by the aged Zechariah and Elizabeth, and the memorial dedication at the bottom of the window? In the next Chronicle we will continue the Gospel told in these windows.

Father Speer
Priest Associate

KING CHARLES THE MARTYR

Saturday, January 30 - 11:00 a.m.

Procession and High Mass in the Presence of a Greater Prelate

The Rev'd Canon Gordon Reid, Guest Preacher

Missa Brevis in G, K. 140 - W. A. Mozart (with orchestra)

January Kalendar and Mass Intentions

January is the Month of the Holy Name

1 CIRCUMCISION OLJC	The peace of the World
2 Octave Day of St Stephen	St. Stephen's Church, Providence, RI
3 SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY	Our Parish Family
4 Octave Day of the Holy Innocents	Dr. Bob's Place
5 Vigil	The Mission of the Church
6 EPIPHANY OLJC	The Church throughout the world
7 Octave	The Church in Asia
8 Octave	The Church in Africa
9 Octave	The Church in Central and South America
10 BAPTISM OLJC	Our Parish Family
11 Octave	The Church in Australia
12 Octave	The Church in North America
13 Baptism OLJC	Rowan, Archbishop of Canterbury
14 St Hilary, BCD	Holiness of life
15 Feria	Eugene, our Bishop
16 St Marcellus, PM	John, our Bishop
17 EPIPHANY II	Our Parish Family
18 CHAIR OF ST PETER AT ROME	Pope Benedict
19 Monthly Requiem	The faithful departed
20 SS Fabian, PM & Sebastian, M	The Joseph Richey House
21 St Agnes, VM	Grace & St. Peter's School
22 St Vincent, Dc. M	The All Saints Sisters of the Poor
23 Of Our Lady	The Eastern Churches
24 EPIPHANY III	Our Parish Family
25 CONVERSION OF ST PAUL	For faithfulness to Apostolic Truth
26 St Polycarp, BM	Christian Witness
27 St John Chrysostom, BCD	The Orthodox Churches
28 St Peter Nolasco, C	The Church in Italy
29 St Francis de Sales, BCD	The Church in France
30 KING CHALRES THE MARTYR	The Church of England
31 EPIPHANY IV (SEPTUAGESIMA)	Our Parish Family

The Rosary will be offered this month on Saturday, January 9 after the Noon Mass.

All are encouraged to attend and make use of this time-honored devotion.

Who Was King Charles the Martyr?

The American Branch of the Society of King Charles the Martyr (SKCM) will meet for its Annual Mass and Meeting at Grace and St Peter's on January 30. A High Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. to be followed by a luncheon and business meeting. You are all are encouraged to attend and honor the Royal Martyr, whether or not you are a member of the SKCM.

The Society of King Charles the Martyr has a history dating back to the 19th century. Since King Charles' martyrdom on 30th January, 1649, countless Anglicans and Christians have remembered his sacrifice for the Church. The origins of the Society can be traced back more specifically to when the Feast of S. Charles was unjustly removed the Kalendar of The Prayer Book. The Society was founded in 1894 as 'a Church Defence Union under the banner of the Martyr-King' and its initial prime objective was 'intercessory prayer for the defence of the Church of England against the attacks of her enemies.' Since its founding the work and objectives of the Society have broadened into a wider devotional society with its continuance in the tradition of Catholic Anglicanism.

King Charles the Martyr was the last saint to be canonized by the Church of England. He is honored as a martyr because he died for the Church. He was offered his life if he would abandon episcopacy but he refused for this would have taken the Church of England away from being part of 'the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church' and made Her into a sect. So we venerate him for his sacrifice and see in it inspiration for us today. In the words of Dr. Mandell Creighton, Bishop of London 1897-1901 and a noted ecclesiastical historian: 'Had Charles been willing to abandon the Church and give up episcopacy, he might have saved his throne and his life. But on this point Charles stood firm: for this he died, and by dying saved it for the future.' Immediately upon the Restoration of Church and King on 19th May, 1660, the Convocation of Canterbury and York, now being free to assemble and act, canonized King Charles and added his name to the Kalendar of Saints at the revision of The Prayer Book.

It came into use with the authority of Church and State in 1662 and since that time parish churches and chapels have been dedicated under the title of S. Charles (often as King Charles the Martyr). S. Charles is also honored for his strong personal piety and for his protection and patronage of the Church. His reign saw the beginning of a revival of the Religious Life in the Church of England and the first attempt at Community Life (after the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII), which began at Little Gidding and was encouraged by S. Charles. He oversaw many schemes for the Church: the restoration and adornment of churches and cathedrals, the founding and advancement of charities, the improvement of the liturgy and the re-introduction of the episcopacy in Scotland. His reign witnessed, albeit briefly, a Golden Age for Anglicanism especially in spiritual and devotional writing which is still much appreciated today.

From the website of the SKCM

January Music Schedule

3 January – Solemnity of the Epiphany
Communion Service in F - Herbert Sumsion

10 January – Baptism of Our Lord
Communion Service in B Minor - T. Tertius Noble

17 January – Epiphany II
Short Communion Service in F - William H. Harris

24 January – Epiphany III
Communion Service in C and F - Charles V. Stanford

30 January – King Charles the Martyr
11:00 a.m.
Missa Brevis in G, K. 140 - W. A. Mozart (with orchestra)

31 January – Septuagesima/Epiphany IV
Short Communion Service in the Phrygian Mode - Charles Wood

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Wednesday, January 6

6:30 p.m. Procession and High Mass at Mount Calvary Church

816 N. Eutaw Street

Followed by a reception

Music: Mass for Three Voices – William Byrd

This is a combined service of Mount Calvary and Grace & Saint Peter's.
Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Weekly Schedule

Sunday

7:45 a.m. Matins & Low Mass

9:30 a.m. Confessions

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

12:30 p.m. Rosary (First Saturday of the month)

Grace and Saint Peter's Church

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

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