

From Father Nik

Each Gospel finds its own way to shift the focus of the story from John the Baptist to Jesus the Christ. Mark let's Jesus' own experience of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, as he ascends from the waters of the Jordan, serve as segue (Mk 1:9-12). Matthew makes the transition by revealing a little of the dialogue between John and Jesus before the former baptizes the latter—that is, John's protest of unworthiness, and Jesus' response: "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt 3:14-15). The account in the Gospel of John provides the least subtle and most straightforward transition by omitting Jesus' baptism from the story altogether in favor of having John the Baptist simply acclaim Jesus "the Lamb of God" to his disciples, whereupon they leave him to follow Jesus (Jn 1:35-37).

Luke doesn't go so far as John and leave out Jesus' own baptism, but he does make that shift in the focus of his story by creating a little distance between Jesus and John the Baptist. Luke creates that distance by only mentioning Jesus' baptism and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him after already concluding the description of John the Baptist's ministry. So, in chapter 3, verses 18-20, Luke tells us of how John the Baptist came to be imprisoned by King Herod Antipas, and only then in 3:21 does Luke mention Jesus' baptism *when all the people were baptized*. In this way, Luke not only redirects our attention from John the Baptist to Jesus, he also reminds us of the purpose of John's ministry of baptism—to *make ready for the Lord a people prepared so that all flesh shall see the salvation of God* (Lk 1:17 & 3:6). Finally, Luke alone tells us that Jesus *was praying when the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in bodily form, as a dove, and a voice came from heaven* to proclaim him "beloved Son." For Luke, Jesus is the man of prayer. Luke will show us Jesus at prayer more often than any other gospel, and that theme begins here at Jesus' baptism. What is unique about this first description of Jesus at prayer is that it is also the first time in Luke's Gospel when all three persons of the one, Trinitarian God are actively invoked in the story. Theologically, we know that wherever Jesus is present, there also is God, the Father and the Holy Spirit, "because the Trinity can never be separated from Itself" (St Ambrose, Exposition of the Gospel of Luke 2:92). So, the inclusion of all three persons of the Trinity in this first story of Jesus at prayer tells us something more about this man of prayer. His prayer is true communion between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—a communion into which we are invited through our own baptism.

Coffee Hour

Thanks to Terry & Lou Ann Cave for hosting today's refreshments!

The Cost of Discipleship

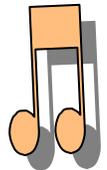
The Men's & Women's Book Groups are reading
Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Bonhoeffer Documentary

"Hanged on a twisted Cross" will be shown at 4:30pm
in the Parish Hall today, February 21.

Choir Rehearsal

In preparation for Holy Week and Easter Sunday
The choir will be rehearsing every Wednesday at 7pm



Please keep the following in your prayers

Henry Vaughn, William K. Glave, Vern Cahill, Cierra Ryan,
Marie Alexander, Susan Russo, Phyllis Bagby, Beryl Choi,
Mary Franklin Fulghum *and* James Palmer,
Katherine Cauthorne, Barbara Oates, Lucy Oliver, Virginia Turner,
Jim Blanton, Glenn Schleede.

Christian Education

Godly Play Children are invited to hear the Word in a fun, learning environment in the Parish House during the first half of our Sunday morning worship; after which, they join their parents in church for Communion.

J2A Youth Group will meet on Sunday, February 28 together with the Youth Group from Church of Our Savior, Montpelier.

The Adult Sunday School meets Sunday mornings at 9am in the parish hall to study the Gospel according to Luke.

Small Groups

The Women's Book Group will meet next on Thursday, March 3, at 10am to discuss the first part of chapter 6 (pp 69-90) of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Discipleship* (Reader's Edition – Fortress Press). Please contact Kathy for directions: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, March 3, at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the first part of chapter 6 (pp 69-90) of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Discipleship* (Reader's Edition – Fortress Press).

Christian Formation

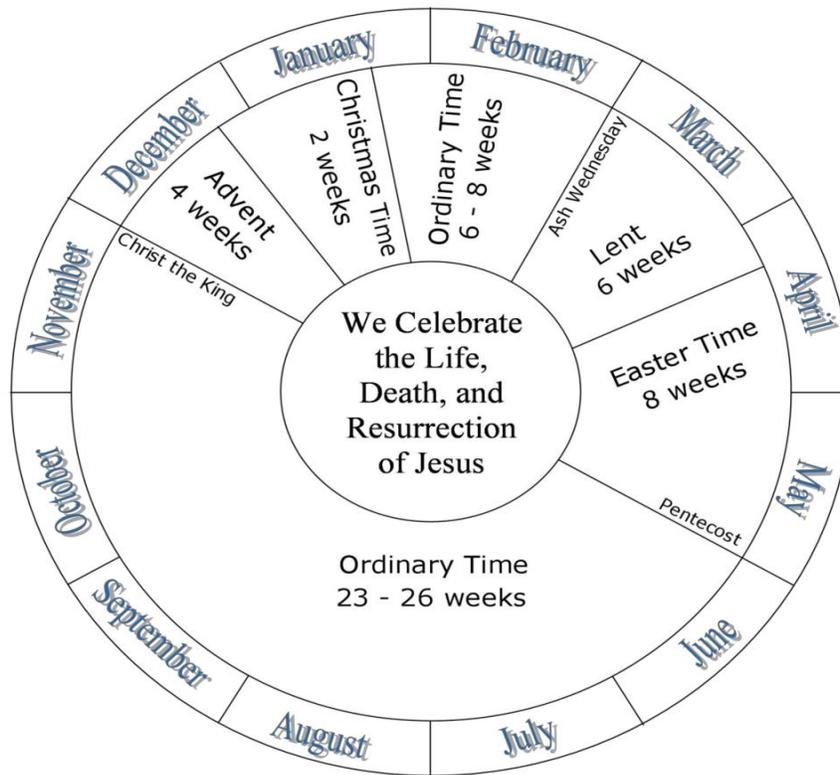
Catechism Classes will begin in Lent.

These classes are for those who wish to be baptized, confirmed, or received into the Episcopal Church.

If you have never been Baptized or Confirmed, and are interested in receiving these sacraments, please contact Fr Nik – KnicholasForti@gmail.com

These classes are also for those considering Reaffirming their Baptismal Covenant.

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Wednesday, Feb 24 – RMC Episcopal-Methodist Campus Ministry, 9:30pm
Wednesday, Mar 2 – RMC Episcopal-Methodist Campus Ministry, 9:30pm
Saturday, Mar 5 – Diocesan Annual Council Meeting, 10am-4pm

Looking Ahead

Saturday, Feb 20 – Vestry Retreat, 9:30am-1:30pm
Sunday, Feb 21 – Bonhoeffer Documentary, "Hanged on a Twisted Cross," 4:30pm
Wednesday, Feb 24 – Choir Rehearsal, 7pm
Thursday, Mar 3 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am
– Women's Book Group, 10am-noon

Office hours: Jacquie Alleva, our office administrator, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.