

From Fr Nik

Thursday, August 28 was the Feast of St Augustine of Hippo. The North African bishop of the late fourth-early fifth centuries is probably best (if unfairly) remembered as the original *bad boy* turned puritanical moralist. This is due in part to his best-selling memoirs, *The Confessions*. In that book, Augustine tells the story of his youth & early adult life in an extended prayer. He describes how he rejected the Christian faith of his mother when he was a teenager, how he tried to read the Bible but found it incomprehensible and uninspiring, & how he flirted with various religions – even atheism. But he also tells how God’s grace slowly and persistently worked on him, drawing him back to the Church and Baptism in his early thirties.

Churches today often anxiously fret about “the young people” – where they are, and why they can’t be found on Sunday mornings. But Augustine’s *Confessions* should reassure us that this “problem” is at least 1500 years old. It should also remind us that God is slowly, persistently working on those missing “young people” even now. However, it isn’t Augustine’s testimony that eases my anxiety.

In my first week here at the Fork Church, before even ascending the pulpit or presiding at the altar, I had the wonderful experience of going on retreat with seven awesome youth from the parish. Amid full schedules of school, work, & sports, each competing for their time, these youth set aside two days to study scripture, to pray, and to prepare for Confirmation – testifying to God’s grace as surely & hopefully as St Augustine’s witness!

Nik+

Welcome Reception for Nik - We will be having a reception on the Lawn after services today for everyone to have the opportunity to meet Nik and enjoy some good fellowship. Please join us!!

EFM Course offered at St. James the Less

Have you ever asked yourself... Where did the Bible come from? Who wrote it? What factors influenced the writing of it? What factors have influenced our understanding of it? How does one account for the many contradictions within the text?

- - And the short answer doesn't satisfy?

Where does God fit within my everyday life? Where have my values come from?

Is the church's view really aligned with what God wants of us?

- - In Education For Ministry (EFM), we learn and practice a variety of approaches to theological reflection to help us see what God may be saying to us or how he may be directing us. We ask questions about how our culture may see a particular event or quality or value and how that may differ from the church's view.

What is my ministry? How do I figure my ministry out? What do I need to know to be a minister of God?

We are all called to ministry by virtue of our baptism into the "one Lord." The study of the sources of our scripture and the influences on our interpretation of such, along with the practice of theological reflection, give participants tools to identify and focus our own unique, God-given ministries, and give us confidence to follow through with the work God has called us to do.

Where can I go to ask the really hard questions about faith and God? EFM meets in small groups to explore these questions together in a safe, secure atmosphere. As adult learners, all questions are encouraged. There are no right or wrong questions or answers, no teachers or tests. We learn from each other and our joint explorations of our own questions.

Contact Stephanie Werner, with St. James The Less, at stephwerner@hotmail.com or [804-986-2953](tel:804-986-2953) for more information. Deadline for applications and payment is Friday, September 12.

CARITAS & The Fork Church

Once again The Fork Church hosted a very successful night of CARITAS at St. James The Less. The guests were well fed with a terrific steak supper with all the trimmings, carried to the YMCA for showers, a laundry mat to do their laundry, sent off the next morning with a great breakfast and a wholesome and good lunch. Special thanks to Howard Anderson and Jenny Smith who helped put together and manage the whole affair and to Paul Jalpers who did a marvelous job preparing the steaks. The guests were thrilled with the supper. One guest was heard to say that “He didn’t know when it was that he last had a steak!”

Numerous Fork members made this all possible. Thanks a lot to:

Alexia Miles for a great salad and bringing half a soccer team with her: Griffin Aderhold, Nate Miles and Drew Thomas; Kevin McLoughin with Clare, Phoebe and Wren; Sally Campbell, Tish Iorio, Barbara Woods, Boo and Jim Smythe who either prepared food or helped to serve the guests or did both; Paul Newel with the quarter jar; Mazie Florance and Aaron Lazar who escorted the guests to the laundry and Y; Bev Smith for helping with breakfast (and was almost on time!!); and last but not least to the Adult Forum who under Deloris Schubert’s meticulous leadership did a great job putting together the bag lunches (Don Schubert, Hugh Campbell, Lou Ann Cave, and Sally Campbell). **What a crew!**

Several parishioners made generous donations that greatly helped make this all possible. Additional donations are welcomed to finally cover all the costs. Just send a check to Kathy Thomas and mark it for “CARITAS”. Thank you so much. **Way to go Fork!!!**

Godly Play

We have had a great summer Godly Play program complete with music with Melissa. On the first Sunday after Labor Day September 7th, this group will sing in church and we will present a short program highlighting what we learned this summer. All children are welcome to participate. If your children could be present for the next couple of Sundays it would be great. I will send the words of the songs as soon as I get them from Melissa.

Hope everyone had a great summer. Hope to see you this Sunday.

COOKBOOK AVAILABLE FOR PRESALES

The new Fork Church cookbook is in the final stages at the publisher. We hope to have it here around Oct. 1.

You can reserve your copies now by purchasing a presales ticket from any cookbook committee member. A committee representative will be available each Sunday to take your order. The book is hard bound and beautiful. It is brimming with wonderful recipes and history, selling for only \$21.95.