

From Father Nik

Church is the work of the people of God—*liturgy*. We began to unpack this claim in last Sunday's sermon. In that sermon, I suggested that the *good* work of liturgy—our common prayer at the Eucharistic Table—is inextricably bound to the *good* work that God has prepared for us to walk in throughout the week. The Good to which our Sunday worship is directed is the same Good to which our actions should be directed every day. But this only hints at the centrality liturgy is meant to have in our lives.

Throughout scripture, God makes clear that the worship we offer must correspond to the lives we live. In the books of the prophets Amos and Isaiah, God rejects the worship of His people because they are not living according to the Covenant but according to their own self-serving desires (Isaiah 1:13-17 & Amos 5:21-24). God refuses to accept a sacrifice from hands bloodied by violence; He turns a deaf ear to prayers from lips that curse and deceive, and He shuns the feasts of those who do not provide for the least in their midst. Similarly, the gospels record Jesus drawing that same connection between the lives we live and the worship we give to God (*e.g.*, Matt 5:23-24 & Mark 11:15-17). And in the sermon, we saw two examples of how St Paul stressed the same in the context of early Christian Eucharistic meals.

But I'm afraid that this particular emphasis might give the incorrect impression that our liturgy—our good work of worship—depends on us living good lives to make it *good*. Our liturgy is not made *good* by our good deeds . . . or moral purity, or precision in prayers, or flawless altar flowers, or reverent acolytes, or anything else we do. For the good work of worship, like the good deeds we walk in and the goodness of creation itself, is first and foremost a gift from the One who alone is Good (Mark 10:18). That the One who is Good gave us the gift of worship—worship directed toward the Good—makes our worship *good* work. This good work, when received, lifts our hearts and redirects our lives toward the Good. And to have our lives so redirected to the Good, who is the Lord we worship, is to make all that we do an expression of love of the Good. Therefore, it is to make all that we do—both within the Church on Sunday morning and within the world throughout the week—*good* work. It is to make all that we do worship. It is to make all that we do *liturgy*.

So, when you serve the church as an acolyte or LEM, as a member of the Altar Guild or the Flower Guild, or even as a member of the Vestry, your *good* work is worship—you're participating in the liturgy. But also when you help those in need, when you visit the lonely or sick, when you work for justice, when you strive for peace, or when you seek the welfare of others and the common good, your *good* work is worship—you're participating in the liturgy. And even your job, your studies, your family life, your leisure with friends, your solitary introspection—when directed toward the Good through the gift of liturgy—is the *good* work of worship. It is a gift from the One who is Good, our Lord.

Nik+

Blessing of the Animals –

In keeping with the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, we will have a short service and blessing of animals on Sunday, October 5 at 4:00pm. Bring your pets and scaly, furry, or feathered friends for a blessing.

Christian Education

Godly Play is currently in session. 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 meets twice a month for fun, fellowship, food, & formation. The next meeting is later today (Sunday, Sept 28) from 5:00 to 7:00pm. We will meet at the Church for the first half and then go down the street to Janeway (11538 Old Ridge Road) for pizza and a bonfire.

Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings at 9am. Through Nov 23, Don Schubert and Fr Nik are co-leading a study exploring the question: “What is Church?” Come join us for coffee and good conversation.

Christian Formation

Baptism – If you are seeking baptism or would like to reaffirm your baptismal covenant, please contact Fr Nik at KNicholasForti@gmail.com.

Confirmation & Reception – If you are interested in being Confirmed or if you have been Confirmed in another Christian tradition but would like to be officially Received as a member of the Episcopal Church, Fr Nik will be leading a Confirmation Class to begin soon. Please be in contact with Fr Nik (KNicholasForti@gmail.com) for more info.

Cookbook

The Fork Church cookbooks are in!

The cookbook committee will be selling them each Sunday.

You may also contact any committee member or contact

Alexia Miles - amiles6395@aol.com or tel. 252-7282 to arrange to get yours.

They will make wonderful Christmas gifts!

Sunday Morning Refreshments

Thank You to all who have volunteered to help with this ministry of hospitality. Refreshments after the Church Service on Sunday mornings have become more and more popular with the congregation and the children. At this point, we still need volunteers to handle refreshments from now to the end of the year. Please, look at your calendars & sign up for one of the dates still open that is listed below.

October 5, 12, 19, and 26.

November 2, 16, 23, and 30.

December 7, 14, 21, and 28.

PLEASE CONTACT MAC CHENAULT AT MCHENAULT@CHENAULTLAWOFFICES.COM OR CALL MAC AT 730-7175 OR USE SIGN UP SHEET IN CHURCH.

Dessert and Coffee Evenings with Nik – *There's still time to sign up!*

We are having a series of Dessert and Coffee gathers so that Nik and get to meet members of the congregation on a more one on one basis. All of the events will start at 7PM. Below are the remaining dates available, and who will be hosting.

October 2 - Jennifer & Howard Smith

October 8 - Scott & Lindsey Smythe

October 15 - Michael & Angela Woods

October 27 - John & Anne Rickman

Please select a date and let the office know. We will also be calling to confirm.

Nik's Calendar

Tuesday, Sept 23 – Pastoral Visits

Wednesday, Sept 24 – Clericus, 1-3pm

Thursday, Sept 25 – RMC Student Eucharist & Lunch, 1-2:30pm

Tuesday, Sept 30 – Pastoral Visits

Wednesday, Oct 1 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm

Thursday, Oct 2 – RMC Campus Ministries Council, Noon-1pm

Thursday, Oct 9 – Fresh Start

Looking Ahead

September 28 - J2A Youth Group – 5PM

October 2 & 3 – Office closed

October 5th – Blessing of the animals – 4PM

J2A Youth Group – 5PM

October 17, 18th - Wellness “event” @ St. James the Less

October 26th - Halloween Service , – 5PM

Outreach Dinner @ St. James the Less

November 9th – Bishop’s visit - Time - TBD