

From Father Nik

In baptism we die to sin and death and are raised to newness of life in Christ Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. In Romans 6:6, St Paul says that when we were baptized our “old self was crucified with Christ.” Coming up out of the baptismal waters, we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). This is what it means to say that Christ was raised for our justification (Rom 4:25). Through baptism we are joined to Christ in his death—we truly die and therefore pass beyond the enslaving reach of sin and death. Yet God does not abandon us to the empty nothingness of death, but raises us into the everlasting life of His Son. This is why the Church teaches that baptism is a sacrament that both signifies God’s grace and also confers that grace.

Grace, you’ll recall, is the theological name for God’s free, unearned love for us. The very fact that you and I exist, that we are alive here and now, is grace. We exist and are alive because God desires our existence. God is loving us into being each and every moment of our lives. This divine love that calls us into being out of nothing is grace. Sin draws us away from this sustaining grace, seeking to undo the divine love that gives us life, and death pulls us back into the abyss of nothingness. Still, God responds by loving us all the more and giving us everlasting life in and through Jesus Christ, who is like us in every way yet without sin (Heb 4:15).

However, it’s not just Christ’s everlasting life but also his justice and righteousness that we have a share in through baptism. This justice and righteousness is a right relationship of creature to Creator—yes—but also of the well-beloved Son to the loving Father. It includes the faithfulness of the one who was obedient unto death on a cross. So, we receive our faith by grace through his faithfulness. Faith then isn’t a work of the human will choosing to accept grace but is, itself, a gift of grace. Faith isn’t about how you feel or even, primarily, what you believe at any given moment. “Faith is not an opinion replaceable by another opinion,” in the words of the great 20th century theologian, Karl Barth. “Faith means a final relationship. Faith is concerned with God, with what He has done for us once for all. . . . Everyone who has to contend with unbelief should be advised that he ought not to take his own unbelief too seriously. Only faith is to be taken seriously” This mustard seed of Faith, which is planted in us by hearing the Word of Promise at Baptism, is also watered by that font of new life through which grace is given, and we are marked as Christ’s own forever.

Coffee Hour

Thanks to the Mazie Florance for this morning's refreshments!
Next Sunday will be hosted by Emily Dickson & Paul Jalbert.

Godly Play Fall Family Event

3:30pm this Sunday, Oct 11 at Mt Olympus Farm
(23298 Jeff Davis Hwy, Ruther Glen, VA 22546)

We'll be making cider, taking hay-rides, picking pumpkins & cooking!
RSVP to Boo (804)-357-3319

Bishop Spong Discussion Group

meets Thursday, October 15, at 10am at St. James the Less

All Hallows' Eve Party & Prayer

Sunday, October 25 at 5pm

Pumpkins & Games, Tricks & Treats, Ghost Stories & a Bonfire!
Come in costume!

Our Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont

is Friday, Nov 6 through Sunday, Nov8.

We will be joining Church of Our Savior, Montpelier.

Shrine Mont is a Retreat Center of the Diocese of VA
located in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley.

Sign-up sheet in narthex.

Interested in Serving on Vestry?

Contact Fr Nik – KnicholasForti@gmail.com; 804-291-6124

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 at 5:30pm on Sunday, October 11 in the parish hall.

The Adult Sunday School meets Sunday mornings at 9am, in the parish hall, to explore the Sacraments.

Small Groups

The Women's Book Group will discuss the first second section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Confession" on Thursday, Oct 22 at 10am. Please contact Kathy for directions:

boysthree@embarqmail.com

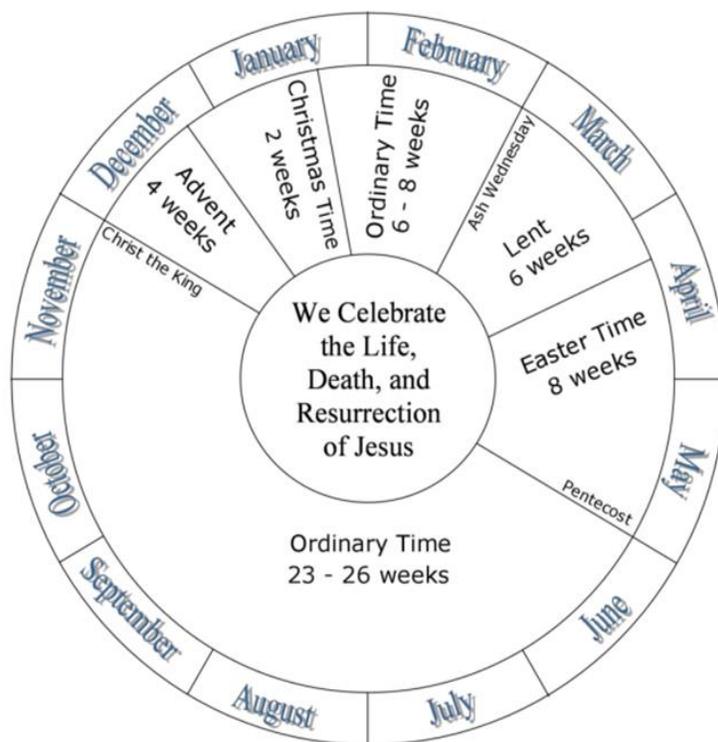
The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, Oct 22 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the second section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Confession"

Christian Formation

The *Way of Discipleship* class for Confirmation & Reception meets on Wednesdays at 6:30pm.

If you're interested in being Baptized or would like to become a member of this Church, please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Thursday, Oct 15 – RMC Campus Ministry Council, 12-1pm

Mon-Wed, Oct 19-21 – Fall Clergy Retreat at Shrine Mont

Looking Ahead

Sunday, Oct 11 – Godly Play Fall Family Event @ Mt Olympus Farm, 3:30pm
– Youth Group, 5:30-7:30pm

Tuesday, Oct 13 – **Parish Hall Use:** Little River Association, 7-9pm

Wednesday, Oct 14 – Confirmation/Reception Class, 6:30-7:30pm
– Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm

Monday, Oct 19 – **Parish Hall Use:** Girl Scout Troop 429, 6:30-8pm

Thursday, Oct 22 – Men's Book Group, Ashland Coffee & Tea, 7:30-8:30am
– Women's Book Group, 10am-noon

Sunday, Oct 25 – All Hallows' Eve, Party & Prayer, 5pm

Tuesday, Oct 27 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm

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