

From Father Nik

Baptism is the sacrament by which we receive the grace of justification. Justification is the reconciliation and atonement between God and us, and as a consequence, with one another, as well. We're baptized into Christ's death so that we may die to sin and death, and we're raised thereby with him and into his good, unbroken, loving relationship with the Father. In baptism, we're called out of our sin and participation in the fallen state of this world—which is as much something we're born into as the things we do—and invited into the righteousness and justice of God's Son made flesh, Jesus Christ. It's for this reason that St Paul says that we also must consider ourselves dead to sin (Rom 6:11-12). Still, Baptism doesn't seem to have freed us from the lure and sting of sin. We feel no less tempted toward selfishness, distorted desires, and flashes of unexpected cruelty than the unwashed (Romans 7). In these moments, we're left wondering if we've made shipwreck of our baptism.

Confession, absolution, and satisfaction are the three elements of the Sacrament of Penance in Catholic theology. **Confession** is the first act of repentance. It is naming aloud, in contrition, those things we have done or left undone as if we were still in servitude to sin and death. **Absolution** is the Word of Promise that we are forgiven and reconciled. In the early Church, the penitent made their Confession to the whole community and was then required, as a sign to the community of their contrition and true repentance, to take on extra disciplines of prayer and fasting. These signs of contrition and repentance became known as **satisfaction**. By the time of the medieval era, penitent Christians could confess privately to a priest rather than publically to the whole congregation, and the priest would offer Absolution and then assign Satisfaction.

By the time of the Reformation, Penance had become blemished by the addition of damaging practices and emphases that may be a discussion for another day—(and which the Roman Catholic Church has since corrected). At the time, however, this prompted Martin Luther (1483-1546) to probe the theology of Penance. Luther realized that the heart of Penance was the Absolution—the Word of Promise that we're forgiven and reconciled. In this way, Penance—Confession and Absolution—is a return to Baptism, where we heard this promise for the first time and were given the grace of justification once and for all. So, Penance is, in a sense, an extension of the Sacrament of Baptism. The grace given in Confession and Absolution sanctifies us by sending us back, again and again, to the justification of our baptism. *Nik+*

Coffee Hour

Thanks to the Emily Dickson & Paul Jalbert for this morning's refreshments!

Next Sunday will be hosted by Hugh & Sally Campbell

Bishop Spong Discussion Group

meets Thursday, October 22, 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, Nov 8.

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 25 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

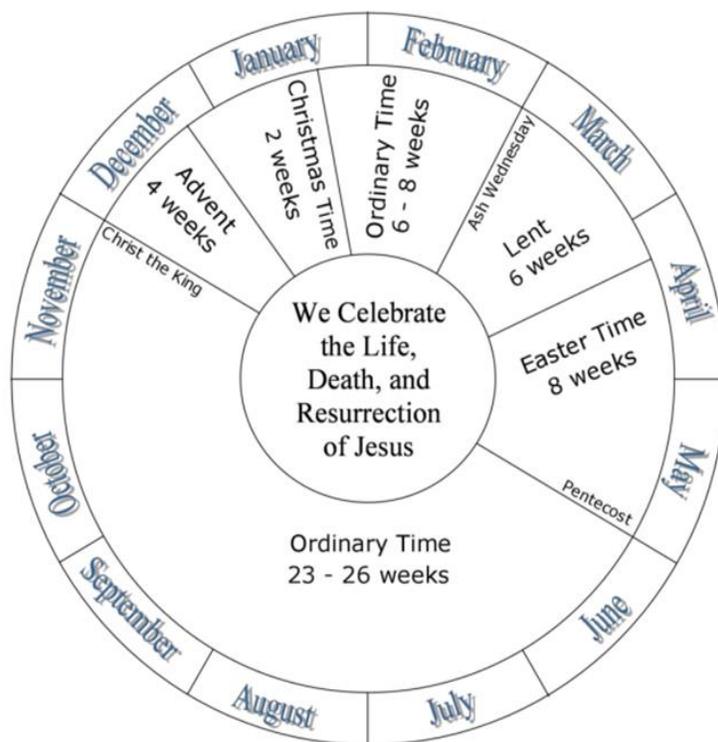
The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, Oct 22 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the second section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Confession"

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

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

Wednesday, Oct 21 – Confirmation/Reception class, 6:30pm

- Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

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

Friday-Sunday, Nov 6-8 – Parish Retreat, Shrine Mont

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.