

## From Father Nik

Some Episcopalians are surprised to find that the Book of Common Prayer contains a Rite for private Confession and Absolution (BCP 446-452). Although you'll be hard pressed to discover too many Episcopal Churches that contain Confessional booths, you can come to any Episcopal priest to confess your sins in private confidentiality & receive absolution in a way similar to the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. This may seem like a modern concession to the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Episcopal Church, which grew in influence and prominence in the past century and half, but that's not necessarily the case. The great reformer, Martin Luther always maintained the goodness and importance of private Confession for the Christian life. Indeed, the Church has claimed since its earliest days that when Christians name aloud the sins that infect their lives and damage the health of the Body of Christ, this subjects the sin to the power of God's Word.

We confess our sins "against God and our neighbor." We confess even if we think our sins are "victimless," or don't harm anyone, except—perhaps—ourselves. We confess these sins, because we know that we are not our own but have been "sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever" (BCP 308) Anytime we turn away from the love of God, or love other things in the place of God, or set ourselves above all others, we aren't just endangering our own righteousness or harming only our own souls. Anytime we hurt or neglect others in pursuit of our own goals and desires, or are complicit in the violence and injustice of this world, or turn a blind eye to the suffering of our neighbors, we are sorely wounding Christ himself (Matt 25). Even those sins that we assume hurt no one, do—in fact—hurt Christ who abides in us, and all of our brothers and sisters who are members of his Body.

It is for this reason that a manual for Christian life and prayer, written less than a hundred years after Jesus' death and resurrection, called the Didache, instructs us that "on the Lord's Day, after you have come together, break bread and offer Eucharist, having first confessed your offences, so that your sacrifice may be pure." We are not to come to the Eucharistic table without first reconciling ourselves to God and one another through Confession and the Exchange of Peace. In the Roman Catholic Church, this means going to private Confession before receiving Communion. However, since the priest presiding over the Eucharist might not have had the opportunity to Confess to another priest before the liturgy, there is a general Confession that the Roman Catholic priest says quietly during the Mass. In our Prayer Book liturgy, we've simply extended the priest's general Confession to everyone gathered for worship. Because we all say the general Confession together during the liturgy, no one needs to go to individual, private Confession as preparation for receiving Communion. However, private Confession is available for any who feel that it might deepen their faith and Christian living.

*Nik+*

## *Coffee Hour*

Thanks to by Hugh & Sally Campbell for today's refreshments!

## *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 is in narthex.

### **Interested in Serving on Vestry?**

Contact Fr Nik – [KnicholasForti@gmail.com](mailto: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 host the All Hallows' Eve Party & Liturgy at 5PM tonight!

**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 third section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Holy Orders" on Thursday, November 5, at 10am. Please contact Kathy for directions:

[boysthree@embarqmail.com](mailto:boysthree@embarqmail.com)

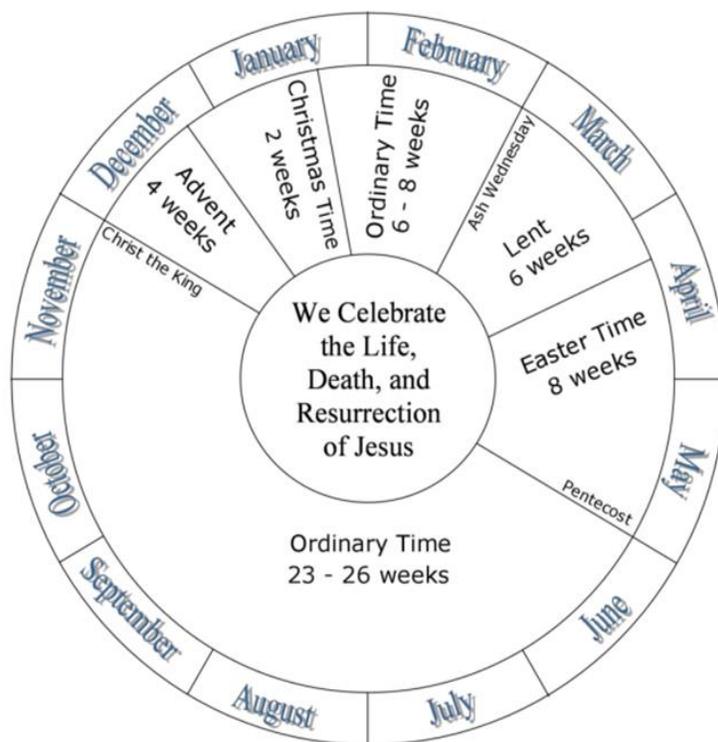
**The Men's Book Group** will meet Thursday, November 5, at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the third section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Holy Orders" (pp 95-117).

## **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](mailto:KNicholasForti@gmail.com)

# The Liturgical Year



## Nik's Calendar

Mon-Wed, Oct 19-21 – Fall Clergy Retreat at Shrine Mont  
Tuesday, Nov 3 – Clergy Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30am

## Looking Ahead

Sunday, Oct 25 – All Hallows' Eve Party & Prayer, 5pm  
Tuesday, Oct 27 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm  
Wednesday, Oct 28 – Confirmation/Reception class, 6:30pm  
– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm  
Sunday, Nov 1 – All Saints' Day  
Wednesday, Nov 4 – Confirmation/Reception class, 6:30pm  
– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm  
Thursday, Nov 5 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am  
– Women's Book Group, 10am-noon  
– **Parish Hall Use:** GS Troop 429 Leaders Meeting, 6:30-8:30pm  
Friday-Sunday, Nov 6-8 – Fork Church 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.