

From Father Nik

For St Paul the sign of our bondage to sin is the power of death over our lives and our world. There are, unfortunately, too many signs of death's dominion over us and over God's good creation, but the ultimate sign of death's reign is the crucifixion of the Lord of life at Calvary. When the God who has called us into being—that is, desired us into creation—and who sustains our very lives, became one of us, we hounded him from birth, seeking to extinguish his life. And we succeeded. This then is the depth and ground of sin, that we executed the source of our life and being. We mortally wounded the flesh of the immortal and now all flesh carries the sign of this sin through our own mortality.

“The sting of death is sin,” writes St Paul to the Corinthians (15:56), “and the power of sin is the law.” For our sin—our capitulation to the dominion of death—is exposed by the righteousness of the law. As long as death reigns over this world and our lives, the law holds us accountable for our sin—that is, for our part in the service and worship of death. But if the law rightly condemns us to the chains and shackles of our own sin, and sin places us under the power and pall of death, then only the one “who has died is freed from sin” (Rom 6:7). But death for us of mortal flesh is our utter end. Only God is eternal. When we die, we are dead. As Isaiah says, *the grave cannot give thanks, the dead cannot praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope in God's faithfulness* (38:18). Yet, by Christ's resurrection, God opens a way through death into the everlasting life of his Son.

How do we receive this grace, this gift of resurrected life, free from the power of death and the bondage of sin? By being “united with him in a death like his” (Rom 6:5). And how are we united with Christ in his death? Baptism. For “all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death . . . so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:3-4). In the words of a sampler sewn by a Lutheran girl in 18th century Pennsylvania:

I have been baptized—even if I die
how can the cold grave do me harm?
I know my homeland and my inheritance
which I have with God in heaven.

After I die, there is prepared for me
the joy of heaven and robes of glory.
I have been baptized—I stand in covenant
through my Baptism with my God.
So say I always with glad lips
in crosses, tribulation, trouble, and need:
I have been baptized, and I rejoice in that—
the joy remains forever.

Lemonade on the Lawn

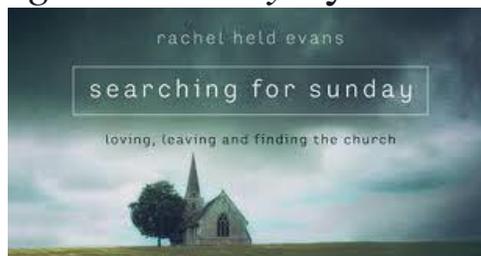
Thanks to the Droppleman family for this morning's refreshments!

Blessing of the Animals

At 4:30pm today, October 4, we'll remember St Francis of Assisi by gathering to bless our furry friends and favorite critters.

Fall Small Groups

This Fall, the Thursday morning Men's Group & Women's Group Will both read *Searching For Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans.



The book's chapters are organized according to the Seven Sacraments, so the Adult Sunday School will explore those sacraments in depth.

We'd like to organize another (co-ed?) small group to meet on a weeknight to discuss the book.

If you're interested, please let Fr Nik know.

Bishop Spong Discussion Group

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

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 chapter of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Baptism" on Thursday, Oct 8 at 10am. Please contact Kathy for directions: boysthree@embarqmail.com

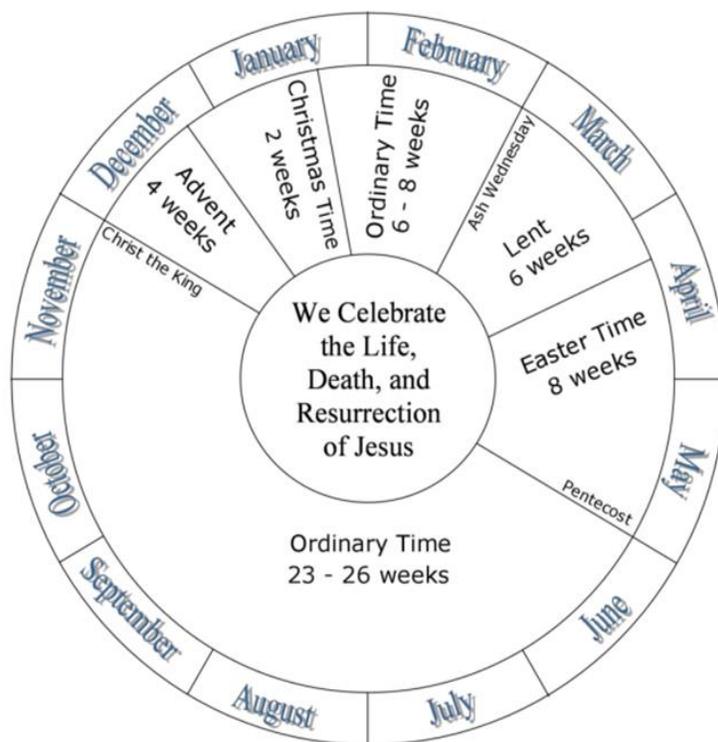
The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, Oct 8 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the first chapter of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, "Baptism."

Christian Formation

The *Way of Discipleship* classes for Confirmation & Reception will resume on Wednesday, October 7 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, October 1 – Lunch with parishioner, noon
Tuesday, Oct 6 – Clergy Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30am
Wednesday, Oct 7 – Clericus, 1-2pm
Friday, Oct 9 – Jackson-Farmer Wedding Rehearsal, 2pm
Saturday, Oct 10 – Jackson-Farmer Wedding & Reception, 2-7pm

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, Oct 7 – Confirmation/Reception Class, 6:30pm
Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm
Thursday, Oct 8 – Men's Book Group at Ashland Coffee & Tea, 7:30-8:30am
Woman's Book Group, 10am-noon
Sunday, Oct 11 – Youth Group - Parish Hall 5pm
Tuesday, Oct 13 – Parish Hall in use: Little River Association, 7-9pm
Wednesday, Oct 14 – Confirmation/Reception Class, 6:30pm
– Choir Rehearsal, 7:00pm

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.