

# THE LION

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## *Message from the Rector*

***“But let patience have her perfect work,  
that you may be perfect and entire,  
wanting nothing.”***

**St James 1:4**

“We live in a microwave society in which we expect to obtain things instantaneously.” So said Dr. William K. Wakefield, conductor of the 2017 All-State Symphonic Band which performed at the 2017 Florida Music Educators Association conference in Tampa last month. Dr. Wakefield observed that the arts, however (in particular, music), fly in the face of this expectation, since gaining proficiency in the arts, especially at the level the young men and women at the concert were performing, takes an enormous amount of time, discipline, and dedication, something that is increasingly absent in our “microwave” society. Without these things – time, discipline, and dedication – proficiency in the arts remains an unfulfilled dream.

I would argue that the same is true where spiritual growth is concerned. All of the knowledge, all of the desire, all of the good intentions in the world will not form us into the people that our Lord expects us to be without us making the time, having the discipline, and having the dedication to do so. As a matter of fact, the many spiritual disciplines that have been historically used to form us into the people that our Lord wants us to be are without any power to do so without us making the time, having the discipline, and having the dedication to use them on a consistent basis.

And consistency is the key: without us using the spiritual disciplines on a consistent (i.e., daily) basis, we are like a musician who practices only occasionally or when the mood strikes – which, most accomplished musicians will tell you, isn’t very often. It takes time, it takes discipline, and it takes dedication in using the spiritual disciplines of the Church to allow them to help shape us into the people that our Lord wants us to be.

But it is a slow and often arduous process, not unlike learning a musical instrument, learning to paint, or becoming proficient in any other form of art. In other words, as St. James notes, we must be patient in allowing those disciples to do their work so that, at least as far as our spiritual formation is concerned, we are “wanting [lacking] in nothing.” True spiritual formation doesn’t meld well with a “microwave” approach to life. It takes time and work to bring Christlikeness about.

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on March 1, the first day of Lent. Why not join me in dedicating time and effort into one of the oldest of our traditional spiritual disciplines, the spiritual reading of Scripture? If you aren’t familiar with the discipline of *lectio divina*, the “divine reading” of Scripture, I invite you to join the ladies at the February meeting of the Anglican Church Women. I will be the guest speaker and will discuss Fr. M. Basil Pennington’s book of the same title, *Lectio Divina* (ISBN: 0-8245-1736-9). This meeting is open to everyone in the parish - men and women alike - and during our time together I will discuss the basics of the practice. I highly suggest that you read the book beforehand in order to benefit from the practice. Fr. Pennington is both master teacher and expert in the spiritual disciplines, especially the discipline of *lectio*. Please join us for the study, and then begin your own long and often difficult journey in being made “perfect and entire, wanting in nothing.” It is our Lord’s desire for all of us. May it truly be our desire, too.

## *Curate's Corner*

Fr. Randall Russell

We can talk all we want about all of the immense “sacrifices” WE make during Lent (no meat or smaller portions during meals or whatever else), but I can promise you that none of that can even compare with what Abraham was willing to sacrifice for God. I mean, Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son, his very own flesh and blood, if the Lord asked. And in the twenty-second chapter of the book of Genesis, that is exactly what the Lord asked Abraham to do!

In Genesis 22:2 God told Abraham, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” And Abraham really did have every intention of sacrificing his son because Abraham loved God. Abraham trusted God. Abraham believed that no matter how dark or bleak or difficult or sad things seem, God is still good, God is still just, and God is still love. Therefore, when Isaac, Abraham’s son, asked his father where the lamb for the burnt offering was as the two walked up the mountain, Father Abraham answered: “God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering.”

And Abraham was right! His faith was justified. God is good and God did provide. Isaac was spared. You and I are spared. In fact, all of Father Abraham’s faithful sons and faithful daughters were spared because God did provide the Lamb for sacrifice and His name is Jesus. Like Isaac in the twenty-second chapter of the book of Genesis, Jesus is also a Son who would carry the wood for His own sacrifice up a hill, up a mountain, as His own Father led Him away in order to die. Only unlike Isaac, Jesus Himself was NOT spared. As soon as Jesus reached the top of that hill known as Golgotha there was no ram caught in a thicket by its horns to take His place. Jesus was the sacrifice; Jesus did die; and that is precisely how much God loves us! As we’ve heard so many times before: “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

So as we look forward to this March and the beginning of another season of Lent (as we look forward to that specific season of fasting, self-denial, and prayer), let us remember that no matter how difficult Lent might seem or how bleak or dark things might appear, God is still good; God is still just; and God is still love. For we can talk all we want about all of the immense “sacrifices” WE make during Lent (no meat or smaller portions during meals or whatever else), but let us not forget that none of that can even compare with what God Himself was willing to sacrifice for us. During this season of Lent, let us not forget Christ.

After all, some of the reasons we observe all of these Lenten disciplines such as fasting and charity and prayer is to strengthen our faith, to test our heart just as Abraham’s heart was tested, and to bring us closer and closer to very One who sacrificed all for us, our God and our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore, St. Paul writes, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, *even the* death of the cross” [*Philippians 2:5-8*]. So this season of Lent, let us all strive to let this mind, the mind of Christ, be in us all for ultimately it is Jesus Himself who said, “If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me” [*Matthew 16:24*]. So let us all now deny ourselves and follow Christ, always remembering the sacrifice He has made for us.

## *Music Notes*

Kathleen Knott, Music Director/Organist

*Two Poetic Lenten Hymns*

In some cases, the poetry of hymnody speaks to us as strongly as the melodic setting. Two such examples are in the Lenten section of The 1982 Hymnal.

*(Music Notes con'd)*

The text of hymn # 145 “Now quit your care” was written by Percy Dearmer (1867-1936). He was a liturgical scholar and hymn composer who eventually became a deacon and priest. He became a Canon of Westminster Cathedral, and contributed to The English Hymnal (1906) and the Oxford Book of Carols (1928). The text of “Now quit your care” is set to the French carol “Quittez, Pasteurs”. Each of the verses are meaningful. Printed below is verse 1.

Now quit your care and anxious fear and worry;  
For schemes are vain and fretting brings no gain.  
Lent calls to prayer, to trust and dedication;  
God brings new beauty nigh;  
Reply, reply with love to love most high;  
Reply, reply, reply with love to love most high.

The Lenten hymn # 141 “Wilt thou forgive” presents the poetry of John Donne (1573-1631). Donne was born in London into a Roman Catholic family. At the age of 19 he converted to Anglicanism. He wrote the poem of # 141 in the early part of his life when he was ill. The title was “Hymn to God, my God, in my Sickness.”

He became Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral and Vicar of St. Dunstan’s. He was known for his sermons and religious poetry. His poetry is representative of the intellectual poetry common in the 1600’s. In our hymn book, a German tune harmonized by J. S. Bach is used for the text of “Wilt thou forgive.”

I have a sin of fear that when I’ve spun my last thread,  
I shall perish on the shore;  
Swear by thyself, that at my death  
thy Son shall shine as he shines now,  
and heretofore.  
And having done that, thou hast done,  
I fear no more. Vs. 3

We welcome Kimberly Williams into the soprano section of St. Mark’s Choir, and again thank all the choir members for their dedication and work during the liturgical seasons.

### ***St. Mark’s Lay Pastoral Care Ministry***

Steve Kinkel

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”  
[Galatians 6:7-10]

The St. Mark’s Lay Pastoral Care Ministry was instituted to offer the parishioners of St. Mark’s Anglican Church an extended level of pastoral care, beyond that which Fr. Mike and Fr. Randall provide. The ministry is not a substitute for the pastoral care rendered by our Priests, but rather a supplementation of it. As we know, Fr. Mike and Fr. Randall are faithful in their attention to the spiritual needs and support of us all, whenever they are made aware. Especially in times of sickness and after the loss of loved ones, they are devotedly on site, whether at the hospital, in our home or at a care facility. With approximately 160 members of St. Mark’s to attend to, they are very busy with pastoral care duties, in addition to the demands of preparing weekly sermons, attending required meetings and conducting the day to day business of the church. But even so, they are very attentive to our personal spiritual needs.

The St. Mark’s Lay Pastoral Care Ministry can provide another tier of care and attention to our parishioners by offering companionship, assistance, communication, and spiritual support. Lisa Brenneman, Janice Johnston, Cal Brown, Linda Philpott, Carol Strong and Steve Kinkel are the Lay Pastoral Care ministers who have offered to give of their time to support our parishioners. The Lay Pastoral Care (LPC) team responds as needs are identified within our congregation, but any parishioner who has a need and wishes to engage with the LPC team may simply let one of us know. The team will assign an LPC minister or you may choose

*(Pastoral Care Ministry con'd)*

the person you would like to assist you. The ministry is in no way intended to thrust an LPC minister upon you, but rather to make us available to you. Some examples of how an LPC minister may serve our members are:

- Companionship through visits to the home, a lunch engagement, or meeting for a cup of coffee or tea.
- Communication through an occasional phone call, email, text message or card.
- Spiritual support through requested prayer, conversation or study of scripture.

There are also many other ways in which an LPC minister may help such as reading to an individual with impaired vision - whether it be news, the Bible, the mail, a book or any other written material; caregiver respite, or sitting with a homebound or hospitalized person. Most of these are functions that one would not likely ask of Fr. Mike or Fr. Randall, and that is the purpose of the Lay Pastoral Care Ministry - to provide that additional level of service to our beloved church family. We are here to assist you with your need. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you need us - we are yours in service.

“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” [1 Peter 4:8-11]

## *Upcoming Holy Days*

### January/February/March/April Holy Days

January 25 (noon) – Feast of the Conversion of St Paul  
 February 2 (noon) – Feast of the Purification of St Mary the Virgin  
 February 24 (noon) – Feast of St Matthias the Apostle  
 March 1 (noon and 6:00 p.m.) – Ash Wednesday  
 March 5 (10:00 a.m.) – Feast of the Annunciation  
 April 10-12 (noon) – Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday  
 April 13 (6:00 p.m.) – Maundy Thursday  
 April 14 (noon) – Good Friday  
 April 17 (noon) – Easter Monday  
 April 18 (noon) – Easter Tuesday  
 April 25 (noon) – Feast of St Mark the Evangelist

## **St. Mark’s Anglican Church**

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