

The Messenger...

May-June, 2019

A publication of St. James on the Lake Episcopal Church

An orthodox parish that welcomes everyone!

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Fr. Randy's Rambling Ruminations:



I. Evangelism as a Way of Life

By way of introduction, the classic definition of Evangelism most often used comes from our own Anglican tradition. The Archbishop of Canterbury during the mid-1940's, William Temple, provided this very clear and concise definition: "*Evangelism is to so present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men (**all humanity**) shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of the Church.*" There are many ways to go about that, and few of them accomplish everything that is stated in that definition. But the point is to scatter gospel seeds intended to draw people closer to God and grow some into Christian disciples who will scatter more seeds.

I want to suggest that evangelism is not the big, scary "E" word we've been taught to run from as Episcopalians. That's another "E" word some were taught to fear. But being Episcopalians is to embrace our brand of apostolic Christianity and the natural gift to evangelize that we all possess. All baptized Christians are called to be witnesses to our faith in Jesus, to be ready to proclaim the hope that is in us whenever the opportunity arises, and to do so in love. I Peter 3:15 says it this way: "*In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.*" We usually resist being labeled as "*evangelists*" because of connotations we've learned that word to mean of a high-pressured faith salesman, or someone who has far more extensive "knowledge" about Jesus than we do. Either way, it's not for us...or is it?

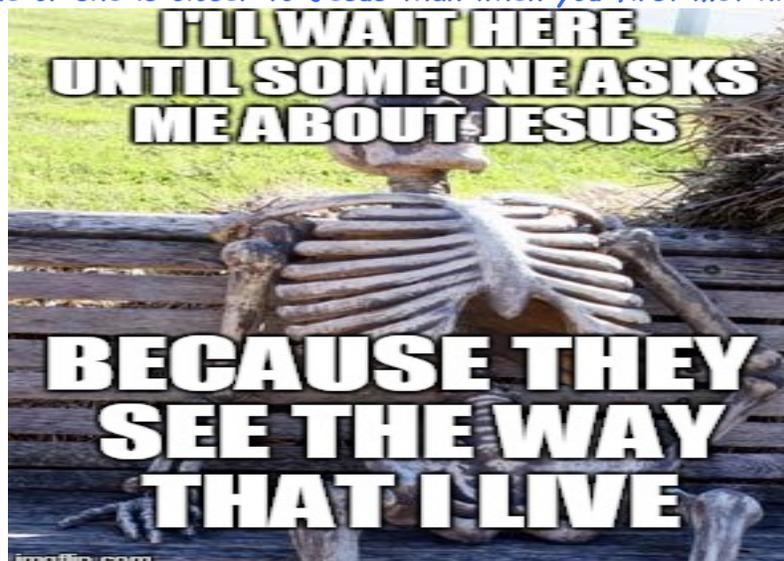
To “evangelize” literally means to “bring good news”...in Greek “angel” is a message or messenger of news, and the “ev” that precedes it means good. We have four books in our New Testament called the “evangels,” the good news, the gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. So a very simple way to think about it is to share the “gospel,” the good news of Jesus, through our thoughts, actions, writings and speech. It’s intended to be a natural thing for any mature Christian to do. When we worship the Lord regularly, are fed by the sacraments, share in the fellowship of Christ’s Body, reflect on scripture and share our prayer concerns with one another, we learn what it is to receive the love, grace and mercy that Jesus’ presence offers.

Only those who received have something to give. We tend to enthusiastically recommend a good movie or restaurant we enjoy to someone, even a stranger, because in our experience it made our life better for having participated in it. Why hesitate to communicate what an awareness of God’s presence means in our life to someone who, on some level, may benefit from hearing what we know to be true of the gospel (the “evangel”) from our own experience?

Episcopalians generally practice “relational” evangelism. We like to develop relationships of trust and friendship first so that the message of good news has a better chance of being received. But when there are times that an opportunity presents itself to share with someone in a way that is a little less comfortable, we try to do so gently and respectfully.

Truthfully, all of us are capable of sharing Jesus is some way. But we’ve been programmed to keep our faith private, worry about what people may think of us, or believe that only religious professionals are capable of evangelizing. The Church has failed her members in developing a culture of evangelism that makes sharing our faith as natural as shaking hands and introducing someone to our best friend. That’s actually what evangelism is...sharing a very important part of ourselves with another. Someone once described evangelism as “*one beggar telling another beggar where to find food.*” If we know where to find spiritual nourishment because we ourselves have been fed, why not share that?

*If you have the opportunity to befriend non-Christians,
focus on things that will draw them close, not the things that will drive them away.
Make sure that when you leave a person,
he or she is closer to Jesus than when you first met him.*



II. Cultivating a Parish-Wide Garden of Evangelism

The vestry has a plan for St. James to develop several evangelism initiatives over the next year to help us cultivate a growing awareness and comfort level in learning how to share our faith as a way of life. Here are some offerings we hope you'll consider participating in:

1. Evangelism 101 class on "The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations" (This class will begin June 6 at 1PM and run through the summer)
2. Praise & Worship with catered Barbecue and guest speaker on Sunday, November 10, starting at 5 PM. Open invitation to other churches, friends and neighbors.
3. 2020 Parish-wide REVIVAL; Tentatively 2nd weekend of February (7th-9th).
OPEN INVITATION! (Prayer preparation to precede it)
4. Carrie Headington, our Canon for Diocesan Evangelism, will come and share teaching on "Sharing Our Faith as a Way of Life" (either in Lent or Easter of 2020)
5. Overall--Cultivating a mindfulness/awareness of God's presence everywhere at all times--Learning to see how God is at work in our life and the lives of others--Looking for God rather than negativity.

III. Diocese of Dallas Missions Day, Saturday, May 4

I have not made much noise about this May 4 meeting at St. Luke's in Dallas, because of Holy Week and Easter week activities (figured it would get lost), but hopefully you've read one of the orange signs that I put all over the church campus, and also the email I sent out a few days ago. The meeting is from 9-3:30 on Saturday, May 4. **NO COST and FREE LUNCH.**

After meeting with our diocesan evangelism officer, Carrie Headington, for several hours a couple of weeks ago, to discuss how to create an evangelism culture in our parish as a way of life, she highly recommended that as many as can come from our parish come to this. The keynote speaker, Rebecca Manley Pippert, is especially relevant to us as she will focus on equipping and motivating our parish in how to reach out to our communities with the Gospel. This fits beautifully into the first two preceding sections of this month's "Rector's Rambling"!

The Bishop will also commission the diocese's first inductees to the Order of Evangelist. This is a newly formed lay order in the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas gathering lay leaders who have a passion for evangelism, so that they can serve as catalysts for evangelism in the local parish.

There are two ways to join the order: 1) Study in a 9-month evangelism cohort which meets monthly under the direction of Canon Carrie Headington. OR 2) Be nominated by their parish priest for showing exceptional dedication and giftedness for the ministry of evangelism. Carrie suggested to me that Karen be admitted to this order, if I agreed, as she was very impressed with her natural initiatives, which showed a heart for evangelism. That will happen on May 4.

"Evangelism is to so present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men (all) shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of the Church."

-William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury (1942-44)

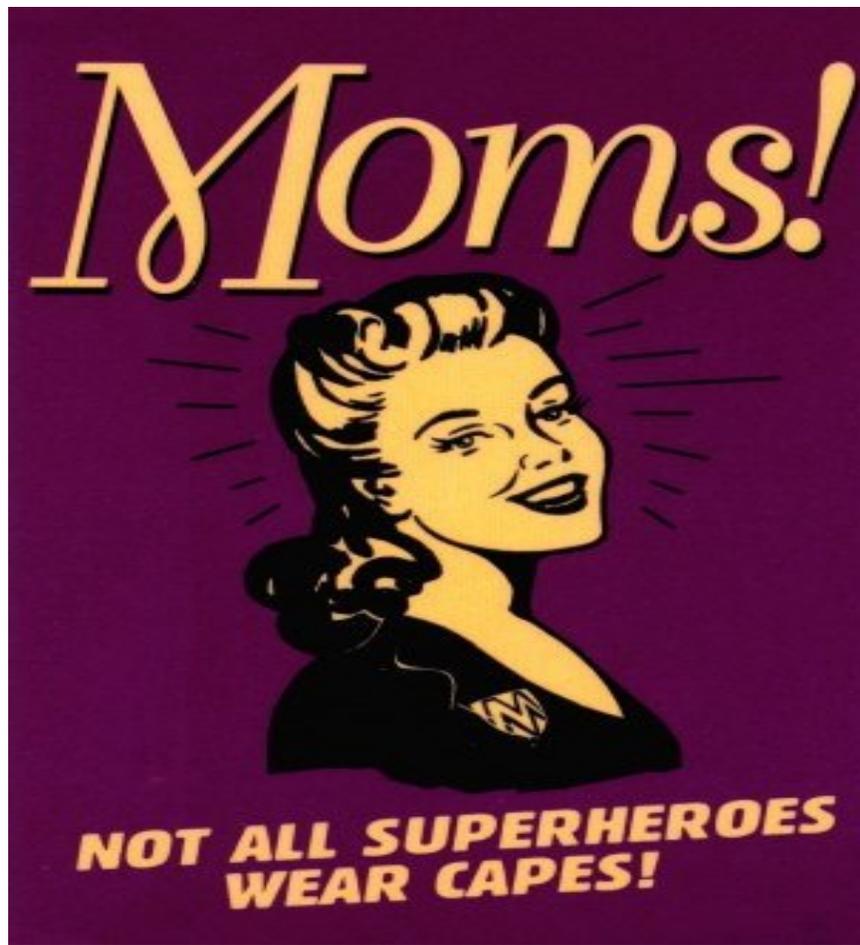
May 9: Fr. Melton's 35th Anniversary to the Priesthood

May 8 Wednesday Eucharist Moved to Thursday May 9*

After graduating from seminary in May of 1983, I was ordained a Deacon on June 11, 1983. Back in those days we were required to serve as a Deacon for a year before being priested. My priesthood ordination was May 9, 1984 on the Feast Day of St. Gregory of Nazianus! Since this marks 35 years as a priest I would like to celebrate the Eucharist on that day. So the Noon Healing Eucharist on Wednesday, May 8, will be moved to Noon on Thursday, May 9. As always, all are welcome!

MAY 12: Mother's Day!

On **Mother's Day**, following the sermon, all women present will receive a special blessing, whether they are a biological mother or not. This is a great day to celebrate the sacred vocation of motherhood, which is inherent in **ALL** women.



KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY CLOSING

Please talk to Bill Shehee soon to get an application if you want to come to the KAIROS closing at Beto Prison. It'll be Sunday afternoon, May 19, and promises to be an unforgettable experience as you hear the "men in white" witness to the power of the Holy Spirit and what they learned about the power of love from other Christians that weekend. To learn more, speak to anyone who's attended a closing or served on a KAIROS Weekend.



EVANGELISM 101 CLASSES

Beginning Thursday, June 6, 1PM throughout Summer

Book Study: [THE 9 ARTS OF SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS: Walking Alongside People Who Believe Differently...](#) written by Mary Schaller and John Crilly, published by Tyndale Publishers in 2016. Price: \$12.99 (paperback) or \$10.99 (Kindle) on amazon.com.

During a break at our diocesan convention, I spoke with Carrie Headington, the canon for evangelism in our Diocese, about this book. She not only highly recommends it, but uses it in her current classes on evangelism! It models for us a safe way to engage folks who think differently about faith but who may be in a place in life where they are receptive to a presentation of the gospel if it's done with respect and sensitivity, which is a style which we Episcopalians excel in (if we **DARE to SHARE**).

The 9 arts of spiritual conversations that are covered in this book include noticing, praying, listening, asking questions, loving, welcoming, facilitating, serving together, and sharing. The last chapter title kind of summarizes the book's goal: **FROM CUPS OF COLD WATER TO RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.**

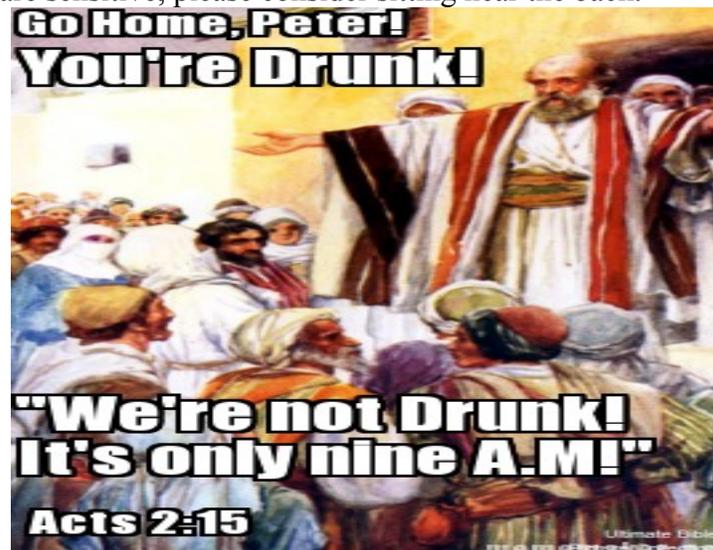
The 9 ARTS is a book that may be one of the best I've seen to help us to do just that in a natural and comfortable manner. Here is an excerpt: *"If our role in making disciples is to love people, then small, simple, everyday activities really do count, and those are what we are responsible for. That's what God asks us to handle; he takes care of the rest. I don't know about you, but I find this extremely liberating. I am free to build loving relationships without the pressure of following the right formula. I don't have to be the one to convict, convince, or convert anyone. Thankfully, it's God's job to change hearts and minds and produce fruit that lasts. I am free of the pressure to "save" someone because it is God alone who can transform a human heart."*

PENTECOST SUNDAY READERS NEEDED JUNE 9TH!

The feast of Pentecost is Sunday, June 9. We need gospel readers who can read in a language other than English. It is a Pentecost tradition that we hear the gospel proclaimed in a variety of languages and also simultaneously as a means of reenacting this great event as it is recorded in Acts 2 when the Spirit descends upon the Apostles like tongues of fire and all those present from around the world hear the gospel proclaimed in their own language. It obviously sounds a bit chaotic and some assumed that the apostles were drunk. But Peter says that it's just 9 o'clock in the morning, far too early for wine. Then he offers an explanation of what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and why this is happening, after which 3,000 people become followers of Jesus. **So if you can read Spanish, German, French, Greek, Latin, Serbian, Russian, Japanese, Swahili, Mandarin or any other language, please call or email Fr. Randy.**

Don't forget to wear **RED**, the Holy Spirit's color. Just FYI...the Bishop, our modern day apostle, receives his authority through the laying on of hands in apostolic succession from each generation of believers all the way back to the apostles themselves. **The bishop's miter symbolizes a flame of fire, and the two hanging strands on the back symbolize tongues of fire descending upon the heads of the apostles. The bishop's ring is typically made from a purple amethyst, which literally means "not drunk" (read Acts 2:15)....pretty cool, huh?**

NOTE: There will be incense, but it will be used as we did at Easter (keeping most of the smoke at the altar). If you are sensitive, please consider sitting near the back.



TRINITY SUNDAY IS JUNE 16 (Also Father's Day)

Trinity Sunday is the only church feast named after a doctrine rather than an event or person. But it is an essential doctrine of the Church. We will use the Athanasian Creed (in the historical documents of the BCP) rather than the Nicene Creed on this Sunday. You'll see why when we do it. **Below is an excerpt of a letter written by Bishop Athanasius of Alexander in 373 AD on the Holy Trinity (a worthwhile read):**

It will not be out of place to consider the ancient tradition, teaching and faith of the Catholic Church, which was revealed by the Lord, proclaimed by the apostles and guarded by the fathers. For upon this faith the Church is built, and if anyone were to lapse from it, they would no longer be Christian either in fact or in name.

We acknowledge the Trinity, holy and perfect, to consist of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In this Trinity there is no intrusion of any alien element or of anything from outside, nor is the Trinity a blend of creative and created being. It is a whole creative and energizing reality, self-consistent and undivided in its active power, for the Father makes all things through the Word and in the Holy Spirit, and in this way the unity of the holy Trinity is preserved.

Accordingly, in the Church, one God is preached, one God who is "above all things and through all things and in all things." God is "above all things" through the Word; and he is "in all things" in the Holy Spirit.

Writing to the Corinthians about spiritual matters, Paul traces all reality back to one God, the Father, saying: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone."

Even the gifts that the Spirit dispenses to individuals are given by the Father through the Word. For all that belongs to the Father belongs also to the Son, and so the graces given by the Son in the Spirit are true gifts of the Father. Similarly, when the Spirit dwells in us, the Word who bestows the Spirit is in us too, and the Father is present in the Word. This is the meaning of the text: "My Father and I will come to him and make our home with him." For where the light is, there also is radiance; and where the radiance is, there too are its power and resplendent grace.

This is also Paul's teaching in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." For grace and the gift of the Trinity are given by the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit. Just as grace is given from the Father through the Son, so there could be no communication of the gift to us except in the Holy Spirit. But when we share in the Spirit, we possess the love of the Father, the grace of the Son and the fellowship of the Spirit himself.

ALSO...Following the sermon, all MEN present will receive a special FATHER'S DAY blessing, whether they are a biological fathers or not. This is a great day to celebrate the sacred vocation of fatherhood, which is inherent in ALL men.

T.E.A.C.H.

T.E.A.C.H. meets on Sunday mornings after Church at 10:30 till about 11:15. We will soon be concluding our study of the Book of Common Prayer. Our next topic will be John's Gospel, taught by either Fr. Randy or Paul.

Office Hours & Contact Information

Monday: Fr. Randy's Day off
Tuesday-Friday: 10 AM - 1 PM
Saturday: Office Closed
Sunday: 8 AM-11:30 AM

NOTE: Fr. Randy is in the church at many other times as well, but these are simply scheduled times he plans to be in the office, though there may be exceptions due to outside appointments or pastoral needs. If you don't see his car, it's because he often parks in the back near the shade. Appointments may certainly be made at other times as necessary.

FR. RANDY'S EMAIL: soulman4jc@gmail.com; **FR. RANDY'S CELL:** (830) 481-8290
CHURCH PHONE: (903) 498-8080; **CHURCH WEBSITE:** www.stjamesonthelake.org

D.O.K. Priest Prayers in MAY:

5---Lorna Rudd 19--Gloria Crenshaw
 12--Linda Shehee 26--Gail Beaupre

D.O.K. Priest Prayers in JUNE:

2---Karen Melton 16--Annette Jenkins 30--Marian Flowers
 9---Kelley Boughton 23--Rose Mary Blaase

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES MAY...

Remember, it will be up to you to get a replacement if you cannot fulfill your obligation.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Prayers</i>	<i>Lesson Reader</i>	<i>Chalice</i>	<i>Coffee Hour</i>	<i>Sunday School</i>	<i>Fred</i>
5	DeLois and Karen	Marilyn and Bonnie	1-Carol 2-Art	Paul	Jeff	Bill and Tina	Dot I. O'Connor Isabelle Claire	<i>Young kids:</i> Gail <i>Older kids:</i> Linda	Vicki
12	Paul and Sunny	Nancy and Willene	1-Sandy 2-Mike	Art	Marvin	Bill and DeLois	Marian Judy Gloria	<i>Young kids:</i> Martha <i>Older kids:</i> In Church	Bonnie
19	Marvin and Stephanie	Nancy and Willene	1-Kelley 2-Tissy	Marian	Karen	Tina and DeLois	Deanna, Gail, Barbara	<i>Young kids:</i> Gail <i>Older kids:</i> Linda	Linda
26	Bob and Annette	Barbara and Sunny	1- Sandy 2-Paul	Kelley	Claire	Bill and Gail	Nancy B. Marilyn Shirley	<i>Young kids:</i> Martha <i>Older kids:</i> In church	Carol

SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRIES JUNE...

<i>Date</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Altar Guild</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Prayers</i>	<i>Lesson Reader</i>	<i>Chalice</i>	<i>Coffee Hour</i>	<i>Sunday School</i>	<i>Fred</i>
2	Tissy and Gloria	Barbara and Sunny	1- Kelley 2-Mike	Carol	Tina	Tina and Paul	Annette Karen Lorna	Young kids: Gail Older kids: Linda	Vicki
9	Charlie and Rita	Kelley and Susan H	1-Carol 2-Art Thurifer Paul	Bill	DeLois	Gail and Bill	Sunny Kitty Meridel	Young kids: Martha Older kids: In Church	Paul
16	Terry D and Susan D	Kelley and Susan H	1-Tissy 2-Paul	Marian	Ray	Tina and Bill	Dot I. O'Connor Isabelle Claire	Young kids: Gail Older kids: Linda	Linda
23	Gail and Kitty	Deanna and Karen	1-Carol 2-Art	Paul	Kelley	Bill and DeLois	Susan D Patsy Rita D	Young kids: Martha Older kids: In Church	Bonnie
30	Phillip And Kelley	Deanna Karen	1-Sandy 2-Mike	Art	Deanna	Paul DeLois	Marian Judy Gloria	Young kids: Martha Older kids: Church	Carol

*A Dabba,
Dabba,
Dabba...*

