



Emmanuel Life

Emmanuel Parish, Episcopal
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Spring 2011

**Lenten Message from
The Reverend Thomas P. Mulvey, Jr.
*Proper Alignment***

I recently told the congregation that every year, without fail, the Gospel lesson on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany is one of the Synoptic Gospel presentations of the event we call the Transfiguration. And we all know, or at least I hope and pray we all know, that every year, without fail, the Gospel lesson on Easter Sunday is one of the presentations of the event we call the Resurrection. So what we have, then, is the great, penitential season of Lent bracketed by two awesome, ineffable experiences of the presence and power of God that comes to us in Jesus Christ. We are led into Lent through and by the power and presence of God in Christ in the Transfiguration. And we are led out of Lent through and by the power and presence of God in Christ in the Resurrection.

In the Transfiguration, Jesus' disciples had an immediate, though fleeting experience of God's full presence here and now. In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, God has promised to be accessible to his people not in fleeting moments, but full time, all the time. One would think that God's unceasing presence would be cause for unceasing joy. But sadly, it is not.

And the reason, it seems to me, is that many people don't experience God's presence in their lives at all. The Gospels tell us that many, if not most, of Jesus' contemporaries did not experience

his presence after the Resurrection. They considered it to be a hoax, or a hallucination, or perhaps wishful thinking. Many of our contemporaries think and feel the same way. And not even the holiest and most spiritual people among us can claim to experience the power and presence of God full time, all the time. Our experiences are at best partial and transitory and infrequent. If we were honest, we would admit that we feel God's absence more regularly than God's presence.

And yet the Gospel promise is that the Kingdom of God has drawn near and taken up residence. Why do we fail to see that reality? Why do we fail to experience that reality? The reason, it seems, is one of alignment. We are not properly aligned to see the spiritual realities that surround us.

I recently spoke of a mission trip that I had led some years ago to Fort Apache, Arizona. Before returning home from that trip we visited Canyon De Chelly. One of the things I discovered in visiting Canyon De Chelly is that you can be very close to an awe inspiring place or event - and yet not see it or experience it. As we approached the canyon, we couldn't see it, even though we were only fifty or so feet away. You could see the railing at the canyon's edge, but not the canyon itself. But as we got closer and closer we began to see one of nature's truly wondrous events in all its glory.

When you are properly aligned everything is right before you. You see it all and you see it clearly. And when you are not properly aligned, there's

nothing to see. And you don't have to be off by much to be out of alignment, and out of luck.

So it is on our spiritual journeys. Every once and a while we are properly aligned. And when we are properly aligned we experience what the disciples experienced in the Transfiguration and the Resurrection: the presence and power of God, the glory and the grandeur of God, in the here and now. It is not wishful thinking. We are not experiencing a hallucination. We are not participating in a hoax. We are experiencing God.

The problem we have is that the many distractions and temptations of twenty-first century life have knocked us out of proper spiritual alignment. And this is where the great season of Lent comes in. The real purpose of Lent is to do whatever we must do to properly align our spiritual senses so that we can move from the transitory experience of God in Christ in the Transfiguration to the abiding experience of God in Christ in the Resurrection. This is what God intends for us.

So then our Lenten devotions and activities, what I refer to as our Lenten craftwork, must have this goal as its point of departure. The question we should each ask is: "What kind of craftwork am I in need of to become properly aligned toward God?"

There are as many responses as there are people. Some people need to give something up as their spiritual craftwork. If that is what you need to become more properly aligned to God, then by all means do that. Other people may need to take something on, a new spiritual discipline, perhaps becoming more green or less wasteful. If that is what you need, then by all means do that. To take on any spiritual craftwork whatsoever is to take the first turn toward proper alignment.

Craftwork is holy work. It can, and it should, be happy work. The ashes that are imposed on our foreheads today are symbolic of many things. They remind us that we have craftwork to do. They remind us that we are out of proper alignment with God. But most importantly, they are

reminders that proceed from a hope and faith and trust in the abiding presence of God in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Let us joyfully accept the church's invitation to a holy and disciplined Lent. Amen.

A Word from the Clergy Warden Christine Bentley

Father Mulvey's invitation to a holy and disciplined Lent through *Proper Alignment* expands on a meditation theme of a simplified life that I have been contemplating, including the following readings:

A Faithful - or a Fevered - Life

Thomas Kelly, Quaker mystic and educator

I wish I might emphasize how a life becomes simplified when dominated by faithfulness to a few concerns. Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. We get distracted by the intellectual claim to our interest in a thousand and one good things, and before we know it we are pulled and hauled breathlessly along ...

Another excerpt is from *The Other Side of Silence* by Morton Kelsey:

God's Active Presence

Our task is to help people concentrate on the real but often hidden event of God's active presence in their lives. Hence, the question is ... not how to keep people busy, but how to keep them from being so busy that they can no longer hear the voice of God who speaks in the silence.

Further, some truly challenging questions come from a discussion entitled *Honoring the Testimony of Simplicity* (author unknown). It tells us that:

We need to think of simplicity not as an impossible demand, but an invitation to a more peaceful and fulfilling Spirit-led life.

Simplicity flows from a well-ordered life. It is less a matter of doing without, than a spiritual quality that simplifies our lives by putting first things first. A simple way of life, freely chosen, is a source of strength, joy and comfort.

[Simplicity] asks us to set aside time for prayer and spiritual discipline that opens us to wisdom and guidance beyond our own.

- ❖ *What in my present life most distracts me from God?*
- ❖ *What am I ready to release so that I can give my attention to what matters most?*

A simplified life may be beyond my reach this Lenten season, but I do feel God's active presence and will continue to work toward the goal of listening and hearing God's voice and reaching for a more peaceful and fulfilling Spirit-led life.



FIRST FAMILY MOVE NIGHT GREAT SUCCESS!

Dallinger Hall was transformed into a movie theater with the big screen viewing of *Toy Story 3*, complete with a full concession stand offering pizza, steamed hot dogs, theater popcorn, and an impressive array of candy. Great fun was had by all! Stay tuned for the next feature film coming to Emmanuel's theater soon!

STEWARDSHIP 2011

In our opening 2011 Stewardship Campaign letter, Bob Parker, Frank Schafer and Ethan Flaherty wrote about two goals: (1) our urgent need to close a \$9,000 - \$10,000 budget deficit this year; and (2) our desire to come together as a Parish with a target of 100% member pledge support, including both dollar and faith pledges. As of next year, we will no longer have sufficient money in savings to cover our budget deficits. This year, with the support you have given to date, we will narrow, but not eliminate, our deficit. Total pledge response is ahead of last year's pace, with 60% participation. As of this time, total dollars also are ahead of last year's pace, with a current projected deficit of \$6,500. Thank you to all who have returned your pledge cards already, and we look forward to hearing from those who have not yet gotten around to returning your pledge card.

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE DISCERNMENT PROCESS

The Discernment Committee (Christine Bentley, Steven Daiute, Leo Horne, Michael Puglisi, Joanne Rawson and Carol Whittall) is progressing with the Priest-in-Charge Discernment Process under the guidance of our Diocesan liaison, Helen Daley, seeking to confirm that Father Mulvey and Emmanuel Parish are to continue its ministries together. Presently, we are in the assessment and visioning stages of the process where we are asking the questions: **Who are we now, and what is Emmanuel's unique mission?**

A questionnaire was recently mailed to parishioners asking you to envision our parish in the future; determining what qualities we would like our permanent rector to possess, and what goals are important for the next one to five years to realize Emmanuel's unique mission. Your input and opinions are very important to this process and we ask that each parishioner individually complete a questionnaire and return it on or before April 6, 2011.

The next stage in the discernment process will be an evaluation of the information we gather. Thereafter, the Discernment Committee will be discussing these results with Father Mulvey and mutually determining whether we will continue our ministries together. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate contact to speak with a Committee member.

LENTEN/SPRING ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Father Mulvey is leading a study of the Psalms for our Lenten/Spring Adult Education Program. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 12, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. The program will begin with a simple meal in Dallinger Hall. Please join us, all are invited.



APRIL 30, 2011 -- SAVE THE DATE!! SPRING CRAFTERS BOUTIQUE

Emmanuel Parish welcomes springtime with its premiere **SPRING CRAFTERS BOUTIQUE** on **Saturday, April 30, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** The Parish Kitchen will have delicious lunch choices at reasonable prices during the event. Admission is free. This new fundraiser will offer crafters table space for \$40.00 and will provide the community one-stop shopping for Mother's Day, Graduations, Weddings, Birthdays, or just something special for themselves. For more details, or if you know of someone who would like to rent a table, please see Grace Garcia or Christine Bentley. We hope to see you there! Be sure to save the date and spread the word!

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS UPDATE

In follow-up to the Building and Grounds Report in the Annual Report, we are very excited to report that the School Committee for the Blue Hills Regional Technical School voted to approve undertaking Emmanuel's project to reconfigure our Undercroft and classroom spaces and will begin work in the 2011-2012 school year. As noted in the Annual Report, Blue Hills Regional charges only 25% of materials and a \$10 per diem for the students traveling by bus to the site, making this an awesome opportunity for Emmanuel. We are presently working with an architect liaison to provide us with the necessary architectural plans, *pro bono*, and obtaining the necessary permits. Progress is being made for Emmanuel to be better equipped to serve its parishioners as well as our community.

The Dianne DeVanna Center
would like to thank you
for being a part of our
2010 Holiday Giving Program!

Thank you for make our holiday giving program so successful!



Generous donations from our parishioners and our eager and savvy youth shoppers made our gift-giving a wonderful success again this year. Thank you to all who participated!

**EMMANUEL'S
GODLY PLAY STUDENTS
PREPARE FOR EASTER**

In our Godly Play classes during the weeks of Lent we are preparing for Easter, beginning with a lesson that presents the seven faces of Christ, from his birth to the cross, revealing the Mystery of Easter in the face of the risen Christ. This is a very powerful and meaningful lesson, sometimes difficult to convey because the Mystery is so great.

After telling the story, the children are asked if there is anything they would like to bring from the shelves of the classroom to place along side the story "to help tell the story better." They are encouraged to tell why each piece is brought. This attempts to draw the children into the story of Jesus among the people then, throughout his life, and that, even though Jesus died, somehow he was still with them, and with us today.



The next lesson during Lent is the story of the Resurrection Eggs. It begins with a basket filled with Easter Eggs, and wondering why we call them Easter Eggs. We explain that Easter is the day we celebrate that, even though Jesus really died on the cross, he is alive and with us today. He is risen. And so Easter Day is also called the Sunday of the Resurrection – we could call these Easter Eggs, Resurrection Eggs.

We go on to open each egg to reveal what is inside. There are twelve all together: a donkey; three coins; a cup; praying hands; a leather strip; a crown of thorns; three nails; a die; a spear; a piece of linen cloth; a stone; and the last, empty. Jesus is risen from the dead! Alleluia!

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday
Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday Service 7:30 p.m.



**Easter Sunday
Alleluia! Christ is Risen!**

Holy Communion, Rite I at 8:00 a.m.

Festival, Choral Holy Communion,
Rite II at 10:00 a.m.

Emmanuel Parish Leaders and Staff

Clergy

The Reverend Thomas P. Mulvey, Jr.,
Priest-in-Charge

The Reverend Judith S. Krumme, Rector Emerita

Vestry

Christine Bentley, Clergy Warden

Sheila Smith, People's Warden

Lauren Durgin, Clerk

Keith Boone, Treasurer

Dianne Connell, Assistant Treasurer

Susan Baker Frank Schafer

Carol Whittall David York

Staff

Judith Cobble, Organist

David Melrose, Sexton

Marilyn Gould, Altar Guild Director

Debbie Puglisi, Sunday School Coordinator

Christine Bentley, Youth Ministry

Susan Bill, Director of Music Ministries

Jennifer Holbrook, Parish Secretary

*Emmanuel Episcopal Parish
is a place of worship for all members
of the community on their
spiritual journey as Christians.*

*Our mission is to welcome
and encourage all persons to grow
in their faith in Jesus Christ,
to love, accept, and minister to each other,
and to reach out and serve those in need.*

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Address Correction Requested